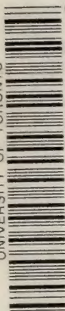


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# Hudson's Bay Company



**P**resented by the  
Governor and Company of  
Adventurers of England  
trading into Hudson's Bay, to

Toronto University

---

to commemorate  
the 250th Anniversary  
of the grant of the Royal Charter.

1670 = 2nd May = 1920



17


THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY

1670—1920

BY

SIR WILLIAM SCHOOLING, K.B.E.





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PRINCE RUPERT, THE FIRST GOVERNOR OF THE COMPANY.

1670-1682



The Governor and  
Company of Adventurers  
of England Trading  
into Hudson's Bay  
during Two Hundred  
and Fifty Years  
1670-1920



LONDON:  
THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY  
Hudson's Bay House, Lime Street, E.C.

1920

157/32  
9/11/20



BEAVER COIN OF THE COMPANY, REPRESENTING ONE BEAVER.



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THE COMPANY'S FLEET LEAVING GRAVESEND FOR HUDSON BAY, 1767.



X



SIR ROBERT MOLESWORTH KINDERSLEY, G.B.E.  
(THE PRESENT GOVERNOR OF THE COMPANY).



# INTRODUCTION

By SIR ROBERT MOLESWORTH KINDERSLEY, G.B.E.,

*The Governor of the Company.*

THE 2nd of May, 1920, is the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the granting of the Charter by King Charles II. to "The Governor and Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson's Bay." In considering the best means of celebrating this event, the Committee felt that one feature should be the preparation of some account of the activities of the Company from May, 1670, to the present time; but it was recognised that the production of an adequate history was out of the question, for two reasons: no definite plans could be made until after the signing of the Armistice, and then the time for preparing a complete record was far too short. It was realised also that a long history—and two hundred and fifty years crowded with episodes in both the New World and the Old would need a long history—would appeal to but a comparatively few people, whereas it was desired that the interest should be widespread.

For these reasons the following pages are intended to give only a brief outline of the life of the Company in the past and the present.

We start with the Prelude to the Charter, making short references to the discovery of Canada and to the fur trade. In due course, the Governor and the Company were declared to be "the true and absolute Lords and Proprietors" of a vast territory, unexplored and for the most part unknown.

The Charter was granted in London, and the book takes us at once to Hudson Bay, and to the exploration and discovery of the New World. Little by little, trading-posts were established from East to West, and from North to South of Canada. They are the background of the life in the Service; and we read of the men who carried on the fur trade which was the precursor of the opening up of great areas for farming and industry.

The Company and its Servants were, of course, brought into close touch with the Indians, of whose characteristics, traditions, and mode of life some account is given. From the earliest days, the confidence and esteem of the Indians were won by treatment that was just, if sometimes, of necessity, stern. No army was maintained, yet, with the exception of rare and trifling outbreaks, there has been unbroken peace with the Indians from first to last. All the products of old-world civilisation may not be suited to races with a very different past, but the Company has carried to the Indians as much as possible of the advantages of the white man's civilisation with as few as may be of the drawbacks.

The Company owes its origin and growth to the fur trade. It is interesting to think of the processes by which the furs that are worn throughout the world come from the wild animals in the streams and forests of the North, and a chapter is devoted to the fur-bearing animals, which are interesting in themselves and have been essential to the existence of the Company.

After this description of the life and work of the Company in Canada, we are brought back to London, where, in large measure, the chief landmarks in the Company's history were determined. There were long conflicts with the French, and difficulties to be settled with Russia and the United States. There were attacks upon the Charter and the rights of the Company, which had to be met. There was the rivalry of the North-West Company, terminating in union; and—the crowning event of all—the surrender to the Queen of England of some of the rights under the Charter in order that the territory the Company had ruled might be transferred to the people of Canada.

This was the beginning of a new and momentous era in the Company's history. By its agreement it acquired a different title from that which the Charter afforded to specified proportions of the "Fertile Belt," and thus became directly interested in land and settlement, with which it had previously had little concern.

With the rapid growth of Canadian cities there came the need and the opportunity, for providing for the varied wants of the new population. This led to the establishment of numerous Department

Stores, which in most cases were the direct descendants of the old trading-posts, and in all instances exhibited that adjustment to new conditions which is characteristic of vitality.

In the meanwhile the fur trade continued as of old. For practical purposes it was the sole interest of the Company for two hundred years. It may be said that the surrender of a portion of the chartered rights in 1870 added two new features—land and stores—to the operations of the Company; this three fold activity has made it not less but greater than under the old *regime*.

The Great War brought responsibilities and opportunities of a new and different kind. For long after the foundation of the Company it was in conflict with the French traders, and, indeed, with France herself; but the days of enmity have long gone by, and it was a singular privilege for the Company to be entrusted by the French Government with great and responsible duties which played some part in winning victory for the Allies.

The Committee of to-day recognise that they are the custodians of a great inheritance, which it is their duty to hand on, enhanced and not impaired, to future generations. The highest prosperity of the Company is, and must continue to be, bound up with the welfare of Canada, and it is no exaggeration to say that the future of the Company depends upon the efficiency of the service it renders to the country it has helped to make.

The Company has good reason to feel that the people of Canada take some pride in an institution, most of the activities of which are carried on in their country, which has its roots in a remote past, and a record which is unique in the history of trading corporations.

The celebration of the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the granting of the Chartered Rights will be, I hope, an event of interest, not merely for those connected with the Company, but also for the Canadian people, among whom I hope to be when we are looking back into the past and forward to the future.

R. M. K.



# GOVERNORS OF THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| HIS HIGHNESS PRINCE RUPERT . . . . .  | 1670-1683 |
| H.R.H. JAMES, DUKE OF YORK ( <i>afterwards King James II.</i> ) . . . . .               | 1683-1685 |
| JOHN, LORD CHURCHILL ( <i>afterwards Duke of Marlborough</i> ) . . . . .                | 1685-1691 |
| SIR STEPHEN EVANCE, KT. . . . .   | 1691-1696 |
| THE RT. HON. SIR WILLIAM TRUMBULL . . . . .   | 1696-1700 |
| SIR STEPHEN EVANCE, KT. . . . .   | 1700-1712 |
| SIR BIBYE LAKE, BART . . . . .  | 1712-1743 |
| BENJAMIN PITT . . . . .   | 1743-1746 |
| THOMAS KNAPP . . . . .  | 1746-1750 |
| SIR ATWELL LAKE, BART. . . . .  | 1750-1760 |
| SIR WILLIAM BAKER, KT. . . . .  | 1760-1770 |
| BIBYE LAKE . . . . .  | 1770-1782 |
| SAMUEL WEGG . . . . .   | 1782-1799 |
| SIR JAMES WINTER LAKE, BART. . . . .  | 1799-1807 |
| WILLIAM MAINWARING . . . . .  | 1807-1812 |
| JOSEPH BERENS, JUNIOR . . . . .   | 1812-1822 |
| SIR JOHN HENRY PELLY, BART. . . . .   | 1822-1852 |
| ANDREW COLVILLE . . . . .   | 1852-1856 |
| JOHN SHEPHERD . . . . .   | 1856-1858 |
| HENRY HULSE BERENS. . . . .   | 1858-1863 |
| RT. HON. SIR EDMUND WALKER HAD, BART., K.C.B. . . . .                                   | 1863-1868 |
| RT. HON. THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY . . . . .  | 1868-1869 |
| RT. HON. SIR STAFFORD H. NORTHCOTE, BART., M.P. ( <i>Earl of Iddesleigh</i> ) . . . . . | 1869-1874 |
| RT. HON. GEORGE JOACHIM GOSCHEN, M.P.. . . . .  | 1874-1880 |
| EDEN COLVILLE . . . . .   | 1880-1889 |
| LORD STRATHCONA AND MOUNT ROYAL, G.C.M.G. . . . .                                       | 1889-1914 |
| SIR THOMAS SKINNER, BART. . . . .   | 1914-1916 |
| SIR ROBERT MOLESWORTH KINDERSLEY, G.B.E. . . . .  | 1916      |

# DEPUTY GOVERNORS OF THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY

|                                   |           |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|
| SIR JOHN ROBINSON, KT.            | 1670-1675 |
| SIR JAMES HAYES, KT.              | 1675-1685 |
| THE HON. SIR EDWARD DERING, KT.   | 1685-1691 |
| SAMUEL CLARKE.                    | 1691-1701 |
| JOHN NICHOLSON                    | 1701-1710 |
| THOMAS LAKE                       | 1710-1711 |
| SIR BIBYE LAKE, BART.             | 1711-1712 |
| CAPTAIN JOHN MERRY                | 1712-1729 |
| SAMUEL JONES                      | 1729-1735 |
| BENJAMIN PITT                     | 1735-1743 |
| THOMAS KNAPP                      | 1743-1746 |
| SIR ATWELL LAKE, BART.            | 1746-1750 |
| SIR WILLIAM BAKER, KT.            | 1750-1760 |
| CAPTAIN JOHN MERRY                | 1760-1765 |
| BIBYE LAKE                        | 1765-1770 |
| ROBERT MERRY                      | 1770-1774 |
| SAMUEL WEGG                       | 1774-1782 |
| SIR JAMES WINTER LAKE, BART.      | 1782-1799 |
| RICHARD HULSE                     | 1799-1805 |
| NICHOLAS CAESAR CORSELLIS         | 1805-1806 |
| WILLIAM MAINWARING                | 1806-1807 |
| JOSEPH BERENS, JUN.               | 1807-1812 |
| JOHN HENRY PELLY                  | 1812-1822 |
| NICHOLAS GARRY                    | 1822-1835 |
| BENJAMIN HARRISON                 | 1835-1839 |
| ANDREW COLVILLE                   | 1839-1852 |
| JOHN SHEPHERD                     | 1852-1856 |
| HENRY HULSE BERENS.               | 1856-1858 |
| EDWARD ELLICE, M.P.               | 1858-1863 |
| SIR CURTIS MIRANDA LAMPSON, BART. | 1863-1871 |
| EDEN COLVILLE                     | 1871-1880 |
| SIR JOHN ROSE, BART., G.C.M.G.    | 1880-1888 |
| SIR DONALD A. SMITH, G.C.M.G.     | 1888-1889 |
| THE EARL OF LICHFIELD             | 1889-1910 |
| SIR THOMAS SKINNER, BART.         | 1910-1914 |
| LEONARD D. CUNLIFFE               | 1914-1916 |
| CHARLES VINCENT SALE              | 1916      |

# HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY

## *Committee in 1670*

PRINCE RUPERT, *Governor*  
SIR JOHN ROBINSON, *Deputy Governor*  
SIR ROBERT VINER  
SIR PETER COLLETON  
JAMES HAYES  
JOHN KIRKE  
FRANCIS MILLINGTON  
JOHN PORTMAN

## *Committee in 1920*

SIR R. M. KINDERSLEY, G.B.E., *Governor*  
CHARLES V. SALE, *Deputy Governor*  
LEONARD D. CUNLIFFE  
V. HUGH SMITH  
SIR WM. MACKENZIE  
SIR A. M. NANTON  
CECIL LUBBOCK  
T. HEWITT SKINNER  
F. S. OLIVER



# The Prelude to the Charter



SO far as history tells, it was not until about the year 1000 A.D. that anyone, at all in touch with the civilised world, knew of the existence of the land that has now become the Dominion of Canada. It was then that Leif Ericson, a Norseman, led an expedition from Greenland to the far north shores of the American Continent. The discovery was barren of result, and it was not till 500 years later that John Cabot reached the shores of Canada in 1497.

Cabot was born in Genoa and learned in Mecca, the meeting place of East and West, that the spices, perfumes, silks, and precious stones, which were bartered there in great quantities, were brought by caravan from the north-eastern parts of farther Asia. It occurred to him that a shorter route would be across the Western Ocean. In 1484 he made his way to England, and explained his ideas to the leading merchants of Bristol, who already carried on an extensive trade with Iceland. No great progress had been made with his plans, when the news came that Christopher Columbus had reached the Indies. This stirred Cabot and his friends to action, and Letters Patent were obtained from Henry VII. "to seeke out, discover and finde whatsoever isles, countries, regions or provinces of the heathen and infidels, which before this time have been unknown to Christians." It was on May 2nd, 1497, that Cabot set sail from Bristol on board the *Mathew*, manned by eighteen men. It was on May 2nd nearly two centuries later that Charles II. granted a Royal Charter to "The Governor and Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson's Bay."

After fifty-two days at sea, Cabot reached the northern extremity of Cape Breton Island on June 24th, 1497. The Royal Banner was unfurled and Cabot took possession of the country in the name of King Henry VII. The soil was fertile and the climate temperate, and Cabot was convinced that he had reached the north-eastern coast of Asia.

Soon after this, fishermen from Europe in considerable numbers began to visit the Newfoundland Banks, and in time the coast of the mainland of America. Less than forty years after Cabot's discovery, Jacques Cartier, a seaman of St. Malo, sent out by the French King, sailed up the St. Lawrence as far as the Lachine Rapids to the spot where Montreal now stands. For the next sixty years, which take us

to the close of the sixteenth century, the fisheries and the fur trade were developed, but no colonisation was attempted.

In the early years of the seventeenth century de Champlain, the French explorer, who was employed in the interests of fur trading monopolies, sailed up the St. Lawrence. Five years later—in 1608—he began the settlement of Quebec. He fought with the Algonquins against the Iroquois, established a trading post at Montreal, and penetrated to the eastern ends of Lakes Huron and Ontario. He was one of “The Company of One Hundred Associates,” which was formed under the ægis of Cardinal Richelieu and was granted a monopoly of the trade throughout the whole valley of the St. Lawrence.

It is interesting to note that, whereas the Charter of the Hudson’s Bay Company has continued for two centuries and a half, the Charter of this French company was revoked after a few years, as was that of a subsequent French “Company of the West Indies” which was organised in 1664.

Exploration and missionary activity were the chief interests of de Champlain, and in his eyes trade was only of value as a means to these ends. In both connections the French were active, daring and successful.

Among them were two men, Radisson and Groseilliers, who were destined to play a large part in the formation of the Hudson’s Bay Company, and thereby to influence the future history of what became in time the Dominion of Canada.

In the spring of 1652 Pierre Radisson, a boy of seventeen, set out for a day’s hunting from the stockaded fort of Three Rivers on the north bank of the St. Lawrence. It was a dangerous game, for the Iroquois swarmed in the neighbourhood. His two companions turned back after a time and Radisson kept on alone. The day’s hunting was successful, and he commenced to retrace his steps, only to find the scalped corpses of his companions, and to be himself captured by the Iroquois. He did not yield without a struggle, and his bravery appealed to the Indians. Diplomacy and courage saved his life, and he was given as a son to a woman who had been adopted by the tribe. After a time he escaped, but was almost immediately recaptured, and could have had little expectation of any other fate than death by torture. The Great Council met to decide his case ; his adopted father appealed for him ; and then his adopted mother glided into the wigwam, singing some battle-song of valour, dancing and gesticulating round and round



the lodge in dizzy serpentine circling, that illustrated in pantomime the battles of long ago. The old sachems were disturbed ; one after another rose and spoke ; in the end, the Chief who had adopted Radisson for his son cut the captive's bonds and, amid shouts of applause, set the white youth free, to continue for two years his life as a member of the tribe.

Groseilliers was Radisson's brother-in-law ; in him the trader predominated over the explorer, while in Radisson, exploration and adventure were the more pronounced.

In 1658 the two brothers made what was their third expedition to the West, which lasted for two years ; on this journey they wintered at Lake Nipigon, which they called Assiniboines. Three years later, without the permission of the Governor, they started on another voyage, in the course of which they explored the northern shore of Lake Superior. On returning to Quebec, Groseilliers was made a prisoner for illicit trading, and the two partners were fined £10,000. They crossed to France in a fruitless search for restitution, and made efforts to obtain support for a voyage to Hudson Bay, of which they had heard from the Indians. Some shipowners promised the use of two vessels for this purpose, but nothing happened. Then the two adventurers met the Royal Commissioners, who were in America on behalf of Charles II., and through the influence of one of these—Sir George Cartwright—they obtained an interview with the King in 1666. Charles promised them a ship, but before it was available, overtures were made to the two Frenchmen by De Witt, the Dutch Ambassador, to go out under the auspices of Holland. These offers were refused, and at last an audience was obtained with Prince Rupert, the King's cousin.

Prince Rupert was the dominant figure on the Royalist side in the Civil War. In later years he turned Admiral and bore a brilliant part in the Dutch Wars. He is a distinguished figure in the history of Art as one of the earliest mezzotinters, while the curious glass toys, called Prince Rupert's drops, recall the scientific pursuits which amused the old age of the great cavalry leader of the Civil War. Science had indeed become the fashion of the day. Charles II. was himself a fair chemist ; he took a keen interest in the problems of navigation, and, as a consequence, founded the Royal Observatory at Greenwich. In 1662 the Royal Society was established, and, ten years later, Sir Isaac Newton became a member.



It was in this atmosphere of new ideas and wider knowledge that Radisson and Groseilliers gained the support of Prince Rupert, and through him of the King; and it was in such conditions that there came into being the Governor and Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson's Bay, where Henry Hudson, the English navigator and explorer, was deserted by his crew and left to perish in 1611.

The first Stock Book of the Company, which is still in existence, records that in 1667, some three years before the granting of the Charter, substantial sums of money had been provided for the enterprise. The first name on the list is that of the Duke of York, afterwards James II., with "a share presented to him in the stock and adventure by the Governor and Company £300." Prince Rupert, the Duke of Albemarle, the Earls of Arlington, Craven, and Shaftesbury, with many others, provided various sums.

In June, 1668, Radisson in the *Eaglet* under Captain Stannard, and Groseilliers on the *Nonsuch* Ketch—Captain Zachariah Gillam—sailed down the Thames from Gravesend. Prince Rupert and other "Adventurers" inspected the ship and its stores. In the captain's cabin they drank to the success of the voyage and, as the Prince and his companions rowed ashore, the vessels weighed anchor. The *Eaglet* crossed the Atlantic but on approaching Hudson Strait, the master thought the enterprise an impossible one and returned to London. The interest centres in the *Nonsuch* Ketch; she passed through Hudson Bay, to the south of James Bay, which she reached on September 29th. A palisaded fort was built and named after King Charles, while the river which flowed into the bay was called after Prince Rupert. Here the voyagers spent a long and dreary winter, finding the cold excessive and "Nature looking like a carcase frozen to death." By April, 1669, the ice swept out of the river with a roar, and by June the heat was almost tropical. Groseilliers had been doing an active trade with the Indians, and the *Nonsuch* sailed for England loaded to the waterline with a cargo of furs.

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THE GRANTING OF THE ROYAL CHARTER BY KING CHARLES II. IN 1670.



# The Granting of the Charter



THE success of Groseilliers' voyage caused those who had supported the enterprise to apply to King Charles II. for a Royal Charter, which, after some delay, was granted on Friday, May 2nd, 1670.

The Charter sets out that "Whereas Our dear and entirely beloved Cousin, Prince Rupert," together with other Noblemen, Knights and Esquires, mentioned by name, and "John Portman, Citizen and Goldsmith of London, have, at their own great Cost and Charges, undertaken an Expedition for Hudson's Bay . . . . for the Discovery of a new Passage into the South Sea, and for the finding some Trade for Furs, Minerals, and other considerable Commodities, and by such their Undertaking, have already made such Discoveries as do encourage them to proceed further in Pursuance of their said Design, by means whereof there may probably arise very great Advantage to Us and Our Kingdom. AND WHEREAS the said Undertakers, for their further Encouragement in the said Design, have humbly besought Us to incorporate them, and grant unto them, and their Successors, the sole Trade and Commerce of all those Seas, Streights, Bays, Rivers, Lakes, Creeks, and Sounds, in whatsoever Latitude they shall be, that lie within the entrance of the Streights commonly called Hudson's Streights, together with all the Lands, Countries and Territories, upon the Coasts and Confines of the Seas, Streights, Bays, Lakes, Rivers, Creeks and Sounds, aforesaid, which are not now actually possessed by any of our Subjects, or by the Subjects of any other Christian Prince or State. . . . We give, grant, and confirm, unto the said Governor and Company, and their Successors, the sole Trade and Commerce of all those Seas," etc., "with the Fishing of all Sorts of Fish, Whales, Sturgeons, and all other Royal Fishes, in the Seas, Bays, Inlets, and Rivers within the Premises, and the Fish therein taken, together with the Royalty of the Sea upon the Coasts within the Limits aforesaid, and all Mines Royal, as well discovered as not discovered, of Gold, Silver, Gems, and precious Stones, to be found or discovered within the Territories, Limits, and Places aforesaid, and that the said Land be from henceforth reckoned and reputed as one of our Plantations or Colonies in America, called *Rupert's Land*. AND FURTHER," We create "the said Governor and Company

for the Time being, and their Successors, the true and absolute Lords and Proprietors of the same Territory, Limits, and Places aforesaid."

Powers are given to the Company to make laws, impose penalties and punishments, and to judge in all causes civil and criminal according to the laws of England. They may employ armed force, appoint commanders, and erect forts. Finally all admirals, and others his Majesty's officers and subjects, are to aid and assist in the execution of the powers granted by the Charter.

Its general appearance may be gathered from the illustration which is given. It consists of five sheets of parchment, each measuring about  $31\frac{1}{2}$  in. by 25 in., consisting in all of some 27 sq. ft. of close writing. On the first of the sheets there are elaborate decorative borders, and attached to the Charter is the Privy Seal, of which we give an illustration.

The Charter is carefully preserved in the principal Board Room in Hudson's Bay House, London. It is an interesting experience to handle the old document and examine it in detail. Some unknown scribe wrote patiently for days on the skins of unknown animals; here and there he made mistakes, and we can see the erasures and corrections; but for us, after all this long period of time, it is the symbol and the formal instrument of a history full of great consequences. It calls up pictures of early sailing vessels, Atlantic storms, and frozen seas; it carries us to factories and forts; embarks us in frail canoes for long journeys on rivers and lakes, and brings us in contact with the Indian tribes and the fur-bearing animals of the Company's great territory.

The Charter has been examined and quoted in the Law Courts; its conditions have been subjected to close analysis, but it proved to be well drawn, and it withstood successfully all the attacks that were made upon its legal validity and the rights it gave. Yet the real power which the Charter purported to convey was otherwise derived. At the most, it was the vehicle for the conveyance of an opportunity of limitless value, because it was rightly used, but which would have been of no worth had not those to whom it was granted, and their successors, known how to handle wisely the great affairs entrusted to their charge.

Some two hundred years after it was signed and sealed, many of its more important conditions were abrogated by agreement; but the regulations for the government of the Company remain to a great extent as they were in the reign of King Charles, though modified somewhat to suit changed conditions by subsequent Charters.

FACSIMILE

*of the*

FIRST SHEET of the CHARTER





# HENRY THE EIGHTH IN THE GREAT

of the King of England Scotland France and Ireland Defender of the faith etc. **W**ill to whom these presents shall come greeting Whereas Our Dearest and Intimate Cousin Prince Rupert Count Palatine of the Rhine Duke of Bavaria and Cumberland is Christopher Duke of Milan William Earl of Arundel Henry Lord Arlington Anthony Lord Ashley Sir John Robinson Sir Robert Voner Knight and Sir Peter Colleton Baronet Sir Edward Hungerford Knight of the Bath Sir Paul Mello Knight Sir John Vesilth and Sir Phillip Carteret Knight James Hayes John Rieker Frederick Willington William Prothonotary John Henry Schinner and John Portman Esquires and John Smith of London have at their own great cost and charge undertaken an Expedition for Hudsons Bay in the Northwest part of America for the discovery of it new Passage into the South Sea and for the finding some Trade for furs Minerals and other inconsiderable Commodities and by such their undertaking have already made such discoveries as do greatly

entertain them to proceed further in pursuiture of the said designe whereby they may probably bring very great advantage to us and our Kingdom And Whereas the said Undertakers for the more commodiousment in the said designe have humbly besought us to incorporate them and grant unto them and their Successors the sole Trade and Commerce of all those Seas Straights Bayes Rivers Lakes Creeks and Sound in whatsoever Latitude they shall see that lay within the confines of the said Straights together with all the Land Countreys and Territories adjoining the said Coast and Confines of the said Straights Bayes Lakes Rivers Creeks and Sound appoynted which they now actually possessed by any of our Subject or by the Subject of any other Christian Prince or State Now know we that we are desirous to promote all Advantages tending to the publique good of our people and to encourage the said Undertaking Hitherto of our speciall grace certayne knowledge and unceasing favour granted ratified and confirmed And by these presents for us our heirs and our Successors We give grant ratifie and confirme unto our said Cousin Prince Rupert Christopher Duke of Milan William Earl of Arundel Henry Lord Arlington Anthony Lord Ashley Sir John Robinson Sir Robert Voner Sir Peter Colleton Sir Edward Hungerford Sir Paul Mello Sir John Vesilth and Sir Phillip Carteret James Hayes John Rieker Frederick Willington William Prothonotary John Henry Schinner and John Portman that they and such others as shall see admitted into the said Society as is hereafter expressed shall see our full Corporate and Politique in deed and in utter by the name of the Governor and Company of our Adventurers of England Trading into Hudsons Bay and them by the name of the Governor and Company of Adventurers of England Trading into Hudsons Bay our full Corporate and Politique in deed and in utter really and fully for ever for us our heirs and Successors We make ordain constitute establish confirme and declare by these presents and that by the same virtue of the said Company of Adventurers of England Trading into Hudsons Bay they shall have perpetual Succession and that they and their Successors by the virtue of the said Governor and Company of Adventurers of England Trading into Hudsons Bay be and at all times hereafter shall be receivable and capable in Law to have purchase receive possess enjoy and bequeath Land Rent privileges liberties jurisdictions franchises and hereditaments of what kind nature and quality soever they see to them and their Successors and that they to give grant devise alien assigne and dispose Land Tenement and hereditament and to do and execute all and singular other thing by the same virtue that to them shall or may appertain to do And that they and their Successors by the virtue of the said Governor and Company of Adventurers of England Trading into Hudsons Bay may please and be unperturbed anywhere and be unperturbed and have and hold in whatsoever Court and place before whatsoever Judges and Justices and other persons and Officers in all and singular Breous Pleas Sutes querralls causes and doubts notwithstanding of whatsoever kind nature or any in such manner and forme as any other our Lige people of this our Realm of England being persons able and capable in Law may or may have purchase receive possess enjoy bequeath give grant devise alien assigne dispose please defend and be defended do vendue and execute And that the said Governor and Company of Adventurers of England Trading into Hudsons Bay and their Successors for any time have it Couon Seale to be in virtue of the said Statute and by the said Statute and that it shall and may be lawful to the said Governor and Company and their Successors the same Seale from time to time at their will and pleasure to break change and to make it new or alter as to them shall seeme expedient And further We will and by these presents for us our heirs and Successors We do ordain that they shall see from henceforth one of the same Company to be elected and appointed in such forme as is hereafter in these presents expressed which shall be called the Governor of the said Company And that the said Governor and Company shall of may elect seven of the same number in such manner as is hereafter in these presents expressed which shall be called the Committee of the said Company which Committee of seven of any three of them together with the Governor or Deputy Governor of the said Company for the time being shall have the direction of the Bygones of and for the said Company and the Provision of the Shipping and Merchandizes thereunto belonging and the





The latest Supplemental Charter was considered by the General Court of the Company under the presidency of Lord Strathcona, in 1912, and in due course was granted the Royal Assent of King George V.

(To modern ideas, the assumption that a King could dispose of vast and unexplored territories is somewhat curious ; but we have to remember that such powers had been commonly exercised for centuries by European monarchs.) In Great Britain, the first trading Charters were granted, not to English companies which were then non-existent, but to branches of the famous Hanseatic League, which was a loose but effective federation of North German towns. It was not until 1597 that England was finally relieved from the presence of a foreign chartered company. In that year Queen Elizabeth closed the steel-yard where Teutons had been established for 700 years.

It was in the age of Elizabeth and the early Stuarts that the Chartered Company, in the modern sense of the term, had its rise. The geographical discoveries of those days gave a great impulse to shipping, trade, and the development of the new lands. In France and Holland, no less than in England, the institution of Chartered Companies became a settled method of working. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries more than seventy of such companies came into existence in France, but the Charters were frequently revoked, and the system finally perished in the general sweeping away of privileges that followed the Revolution.

From time to time (the validity of Charters, among them that of the Hudson's Bay Company, was challenged ; but invariably the highest legal authorities declared it to be undoubtedly good in law.)

The system of limited liability companies had not been invented ; the enterprises were too great to be undertaken by private individuals, and the institution of a Chartered Company gave the best, if not the only, opportunity for the establishment of colonies, which was thought to be desirable by England and France, by Holland, Spain, and Portugal.

Many of the Chartered Companies failed through bad administration or organisation ; through want of capital, or through the distribution of dividends made prematurely or fictitiously. When under able management, they were able to carry on their enterprise until the development of the countries in which they operated reached a comparatively advanced point, and gave rise to questions of national, or international, policy for the Mother Kingdom by which the Charter was granted.

Then some change was needed, such as was the case with the Hudson's Bay Company in 1869, when a large part of its rights under the Charter were ceded to the Canadian Government on agreed terms.

We shall deal subsequently with this important change. In the meantime it will be well to remember that the Hudson's Bay and other Chartered Companies, though possessing privileges that could not be disputed by the law of the land, were subject to economic laws from which there was no escape. Their success depended not only on efficient administration, but on successive adaptations to new conditions, and a readiness to forego, as circumstances required, the full exercise of those privileges to which they had a legal right.

It is no less essential to success that duties should be recognised as well as privileges. Against their own apparent financial interests, Chartered Companies have carried on anti-slavery and anti-alcohol campaigns; they have developed countries at an outlay which promised no immediate return; have contributed to the cost of military expeditions; have even prevented national wars; and, at least on some occasions, the shareholders have been compelled to "take out their dividends in philanthropy."

Whatever status a company may hold in the eye of the law, it could not continue for two hundred and fifty years unless it made constant adjustments to the changing conditions of the times. Sometimes slowly and reluctantly, sometimes with wise forethought, the Hudson's Bay Company has made these necessary changes, and by its influence, its great resources, and the ability of its Servants, it prepared the way for the development of the great Dominion of Canada, in the further progress of which it is, and will be, a power of the first importance.





OBVERSE AND REVERSE OF THE GREAT SEAL OF ENGLAND ATTACHED TO THE  
ROYAL CHARTER.



# Exploration and Discovery



FOR long ages before the earth was fit for human habitation, and during the thousands of years in which ancient civilisations were rising and falling, the forces of Nature were determining the distribution of land and water, the climatic conditions, the fauna and the flora, of that vast, vaguely defined, territory of which the Charter of the English King purported to make the Governor and Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson's Bay "the true and absolute Lords and Proprietors."

Nearly the whole of this Rupert's Land was then unknown. For the next two centuries, or more, it was to be the scene of adventure and exploration by men who faced difficulties, hardships and death, sometimes for the expansion of trade, sometimes for mere love of discovery and adventure, but always consciously, or unconsciously, making their contribution towards the foundation of a mighty empire.

One reason given for the application for the Charter was "the Discovery of a new Passage into the South Sea." This enterprise fascinated many generations, and it was long supposed that such a discovery would have practical consequences of great value; but it was other discoveries, which at first were un contemplated and often embarked upon without any great purpose in view, that were to prove of the most importance.

Without maps, in frail canoes, and with but little in the way of equipment or supplies, men faced the dangers of the unknown. That many such adventures should end in failure and disaster is natural enough, but that, in such circumstances, so many should have succeeded is a matter for continual surprise. To-day a map of Canada, perpetuating the names of explorers, is an epitome of centuries of adventure and heroism, with great consequences already accomplished, and great possibilities that may yet be realised.

In this work of discovery the servants of the Hudson's Bay Company have throughout played a prominent part; more especially in those explorations which have brought accomplishment rather than possibility; which have led to the growth of great cities and have made large parts of Canada the granary of the world.

It is said that, during the Great War, sixty new kinds of plants



were discovered within a short radius of a cavalry camp in Surrey, England. The seeds were brought from many parts of the world in the fodder for the horses, and of course by accident. In corresponding fashion the seeds sown by the enterprise of the servants of the Hudson's Bay Company have led to the development of an ample and abundant life in ways that were never expected, and which it would have been folly to predict.

Pierre Esprit Radisson has already been mentioned in connection with the founding of the Hudson's Bay Company, and something has been told of his capture by, and life among, the Indians ; but as the first white man to explore the West, the North-West, and the North, his adventures and discoveries deserve fuller notice. He was born in France in about 1636, and we meet him first at Three Rivers, between Quebec and Montreal. After his capture he became the adopted son of an Iroquois Chief and found himself, at the age of seventeen, assigned to a band of young braves who were to raid the borderlands between the Huron country of the upper lakes and the St. Lawrence. He wandered for months round the regions of Niagara and on to the vast forests between Lakes Ontario and Erie. He had hoped for an opportunity for escape but none presented itself ; yet his valour on the war-path had established the confidence of the Indians, who took him on a freebooting expedition against the whites of the Dutch Settlements at Fort Orange, Albany. Here his nationality was discovered by a Frenchman, and the Dutch offered to ransom him at any price. Radisson had pledged himself to return to his Indian parents ; the Dutch were the enemies of New France, and their offer was declined. Among the Iroquois he was ten times more a hero than he had ever been. In spite of his love for the wilds, the sight of white men and the sound of his own language, as also the repulsive habits and cruelties of the Mohawks, determined him to escape. This was effected with no great difficulty, and he found himself once more at Orange, whence he sailed down the Hudson to New York, which then consisted of some 500 houses ; Central Park was a forest, and cows pastured on the Wall Street of to-day. Thence he sailed to Amsterdam, which he reached in the beginning of 1654.

Early in the same year he joined the fishing fleet that left France for the Grand Banks, and once again found himself on the St. Lawrence and at Three Rivers. During his two years' absence great changes had taken place. A truce had been arranged between the Iroquois

and the French, which the Jesuits thought gave them an opportunity for a mission to these Indians, of whom the Mohawks, who had captured Radisson, were one tribe. The Iroquois, however, while generally friendly to the English, were almost invariably hostile to the French. They welcomed the teaching of the priests, whom they led to the Council Lodge and presented with belts of wampum. Then they asked that a French Settlement might be made in the Iroquois country, and fifty colonists established themselves among the Onondagas, another Iroquois tribe. The Jesuits and the Governor of Three Rivers had no suspicion that the motives were to obtain the white men as hostages, miles away from help, so that the Iroquois might safely wage war against the Algonquins without fear of reprisals from Quebec. Against an expedition in which Radisson participated, treachery was planned and carried out. Many men of the Huron tribe, who formed part of the expedition, were massacred by the Iroquois, and the remnants of the party made their way with great difficulty to the little French colony at Onondaga. Here they were besieged throughout the winter by four hundred Mohawks; the river was blocked with ice and there was no means of escape. Radisson's ingenuity was brought into play; in readiness for the spring, two large flat-bottomed boats were prepared, and then, knowing the customs of the Mohawks, Radisson invited them to a great feast. They ate to repletion, perhaps they were drugged, and the little party escaped in their boats. They had not gone far before the roar of waters told of a cataract ahead; they were four hours carrying baggage and boats over this *portage*; sleet beat upon their backs; the rocks were slippery with glazed ice, and the men sank to mid-waist in half-thawed snow. Lake Ontario was a rough sea, and the ice was jammed in the St. Lawrence. After a fortnight of difficulties such as these they arrived at Montreal, and three weeks later they moored in safety under the heights of Quebec.

Before Radisson was born, a French explorer had reached Lake Michigan, and a little later the Jesuit martyr Jogues had preached to the Indians of Sault Ste. Marie, but beyond there was an unknown world—the great North-West. From it came the stores of beaver pelts, brought by the Algonquins to Three Rivers; and in it dwelt strange, wild races, whose territory extended North-West and North to unknown, nameless seas. There came news of far distant waters called Lake “Ouinipeg;” of the Crees, who spent their winters on the prairie and their summers on Hudson Bay, and



of other tribes who were great warriors—the Sioux—living to the South.

Thirty young Frenchmen, with two Jesuit priests, equipped themselves to return with the Algonquins to these unknown lands. On this expedition sixty canoes left Quebec, but the flotilla was ambushed by the Mohawks. The Jesuit Dreuilletes and one companion alone held on their way ; this companion was Groseilliers, who was married to Radisson's sister, and who, as we have seen, was concerned with the beginnings of the Hudson's Bay Company. The stories Groseilliers told fired the ambition of Radisson, who, as a captive among the Mohawks, had cherished boyish dreams that it was to be his " destiny to discover many wild nations." Radisson had been tortured by the Iroquois and besieged among the Onondagas ; Groseilliers had been among the Huron missions that were destroyed, and with the Algonquin canoes that were attacked. Both knew the perils that awaited them on the new adventure they determined to undertake.

Shortly after the previous voyage, they joined a party of Algonquins who were returning from Montreal, some of whom had firearms for the first time and thought themselves invincible. A score or more of Frenchmen, gaily ignorant of the dangers that lay ahead, again with two Jesuit priests, made up the party. Their course lay through the country of the hostile Iroquois, but, in spite of this, Radisson and Groseilliers could not persuade their companions to take precautionary measures ; the canoes separated, and, as the expedition straggled up to a waterfall where *portage* was necessary, they were attacked by the Iroquois. Of the white men only Radisson and Groseilliers went on with the Algonquins. They travelled now only at night, and could not hunt, lest Mohawk spies might hear the gunshots. Provisions dwindled, and presently the food consisted of *tripe de roche* and such few fish as could be caught.

This *tripe de roche*, a greenish moss boiled into a soup, which staves hunger but gives no nourishment, constantly illustrates the hardships of the early explorers. Sometimes those who followed traced the course of recent pioneers by the places where moss had been cut, and then, it may be came upon a group of skeletons, evidence of privation and hunger.

The two young Frenchmen kept on through Lake Huron into Lake Michigan, and reached the farthest point to which white men had as yet travelled. Here there were signs of Iroquois on the warpath ;





A MAP OF NORTH AMERICA, SHOWING CANADA OR NEW FRANCE, AND THE TERRITORIES GRANTED THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY UNDER THE CHARTER. (1748.)



and before making winter camp, or waiting to be attacked, Radisson led a band of Algonquins to search out the enemy ; on the third day Radisson and his Indians caught the Iroquois unprepared and not one escaped.

“ Our mind was not to stay here,” writes Radisson, “ but to know the remotest people ; and, because we had been willing to die in their defence, these Indians consented to conduct us.” Before the spring of 1659 they had been guided across what is now Wisconsin to “ a mighty river, great, rushing, profound, and comparable to the St. Lawrence.” This was the Upper Mississippi—literally, Father of Waters—which white men now saw for the first time ; they found upon its shores “ the people of the fire,” a branch of the Sioux. Radisson had entered the great North-West, and, with all his imagination and his dreams, he could not picture the significance of the discovery.

From the prairie tribes of the Mississippi he heard not only of the Sioux, a warlike nation to the West, but of the Crees, a nomadic tribe to the North, between whom there was a constant state of war. Between them were the Assiniboines, who used earthen pots for cooking and heated their food by throwing hot stones in water. He was told, too, of yet another nation who lived in villages, like the Iroquois, on a great river that divided itself into two branches, one to the West and one to the South ; these were the Mandans, the Omahas, or other people of the Missouri. A whole world of discoveries lay ahead. Radisson turned South and struck across the high land between the Mississippi and the Missouri ; he appears to have seen something of what are now Wisconsin, South Dakota, and Nebraska, and to have returned through North Dakota and Minnesota to the shore of Lake Superior. By this time it was the fall of 1659, and Radisson determined to venture into the North-West. Groseilliers' health began to fail from the hardships he had endured, so he remained in camp for the winter, attending to the trade, while Radisson set out with one hundred and fifty Cree hunters for the North-West. In one of the coldest winters known they travelled on snowshoes some 200 miles to what is now Manitoba ; they hunted moose on the way, and slept at night round the camp fire. When the ice thawed in the spring, they built some boats and made their way back to Lake Superior.

Groseilliers had all in readiness to depart for Quebec, when news came that more than 1,000 Iroquois were on the warpath. The Indians of various tribes who were with Radisson were terrified, but



the Chiefs sent word that 500 young warriors would go to Quebec with the white men. There were many conflicts with the Iroquois, but at last, after two years' absence, Radisson and Groseilliers arrived at Montreal; they stayed for a short rest at Three Rivers and were then escorted to Quebec. Here they had a great reception, the more cordial because the Iroquois warfare had been so ceaseless that three French ships, lying at anchor, would have returned without a single beaver skin if the explorers had not come.

The adventurous Frenchmen were soon eager to start on another expedition. This time their object was to be the discovery of an overland route to the Bay of the North—Hudson Bay—of which news was brought by the Indians and from the neighbourhood of which came a vast wealth of furs. Permission was sought from the Governor of Three Rivers, who would only give a license on condition that half the profits of the trip should be paid to him. Radisson and Groseilliers refused any such terms and went without permission, knowing that the galleys for life, or even death for a second offence, was the punishment for trading without a license. After many conflicts with the Iroquois, they found themselves by the end of November, 1661, at the western end of Lake Superior, whence they proceeded north-west. The Crees wished to conduct them to the wooded lake region, where Indian families took refuge on the islands from the warlike Sioux, who, invincible on horseback, were not skilful with canoes. The explorers, however, were unable to go with the Crees because they had no means of transporting the goods brought for trade. They sent the Indians on, with instructions to bring back slaves to carry the baggage.

Then a notable thing happened; Radisson and Groseilliers built, somewhere west of Duluth, the first fort and the first fur post between the Missouri and the North Pole. The fur trade discovered and explored the West and made possible the subsequent development. We can look back to this first fort, rushed up in two days by two almost starving men, as the tangible origin of the modern life of the great North-West.

They were 2,000 miles from help and needed sentries; Radisson made his sentries of bells, attached to cords concealed in the grass and branches round the fort. The news of the two white men spread rapidly, and, when the Indians came, Radisson rolled gunpowder in twisted tubes of birchbark and ran a circle of this round the fort. He put a



TRACKING.



PORTAGE ON ATHABASCA RIVER.





torch to it, and the Indians saw a magic circle of fire, which was to defend the adventurers from all harm. After many hardships and adventures, they found themselves at the Lake of the Woods and discovered the watershed sloping North from the Great Lakes to Hudson Bay.

They returned to Three Rivers, where, as already recorded, the Governor imprisoned Groseilliers and fined both the explorers. They brought back a cargo worth 300,000 dollars in modern money, and had less than 20,000 dollars left for themselves.

This treatment, for which they could obtain no redress in France, led them in the end to Prince Rupert and the English Court, and, in no indirect way, led to Canada becoming part of the British Empire.

To found the first fort in the West, to cause Canada to be British, were the two achievements of this expedition.

In 1668, Radisson in the *Eaglet*, and Groseilliers in the *Nonsuch*, set out to reach Hudson Bay by sea. The French had contemplated the approach to it by land; they forgot the maritime record of England, which once again was to prove decisive in determining supremacy over new lands. The *Nonsuch* alone reached its destination, passed through Hudson Strait and Bay, and came to anchor at the south of James Bay on September 29th. A palisaded fort was built, where Groseilliers and Gillam, the captain of the *Nonsuch*, spent the winter, returning to England in the following spring with a rich cargo of furs.

Then came the Charter, and in 1671 Radisson and Groseilliers were again at the Bay. A second post was established at Moose, and Radisson, with Charles Bailey, who had been sent out by the Company as Governor of the territory called Rupert's Land in accordance with the conditions of the Charter, sailed up the Bay and met the Indians in the neighbourhood of what was to become the great fur capital of the North—York Factory, near Port Nelson.

Some ten years later, Radisson and Groseilliers again sailed into Hudson Bay, but this time under French auspices. They made for Hayes River, just south of Port Nelson. Leaving his brother-in-law to build a fort, Radisson launched a canoe on Hayes River to explore inland. He reached the region of Lake Winnipeg, to which he had come with the Cree hunters by way of Lake Superior, some twenty years before. The course he followed from Hudson Bay to Lake Winnipeg was to be the path of countless traders and pioneers for two centuries. He had passed from the Atlantic to the St. Lawrence; to

the Great Lakes and the region of Lake Winnipeg, and thence by Hudson Bay and Hudson Strait to the Atlantic again. He made other voyages to the Bay, once again in the service of the great Company. The place and time of his death are unknown, but probably he died in about 1710 at the age of seventy-four.

To these two Frenchmen, Radisson and Groseilliers, the foundation of the Hudson's Bay Company was largely due. Two hundred and fifty years later, France, in the hour of her need, obtained the assistance of the Company in the Great War.

For many years after the commencement of the Company, it made no great efforts at exploring its territory. Its main business was the fur trade, and it relied upon the Indians bringing the furs to the forts it had established. The Indians were quite willing to make long and difficult journeys for the sake of obtaining goods which appear to us to be of trifling value. The Company, however, was not having things all its own way, for the French fur traders were vigorous competitors and did their best to prevent the Indians going to the Company's forts. It was not until 1688 that a really brave and adventurous man appeared among the Company's servants. This was Henry Kelsey, a lad barely eighteen, who was the forerunner of the British pioneers of the next century. He is described as "delighting much in Indians' company; being never better pleased than when he is travelling amongst them." Young as he was, Kelsey volunteered to find a site for a fort on Churchill River, on the west side of the Bay and farther North than Port Nelson. There is no record of this trip, but he repeated it two years later, when he kept a detailed diary. In July, 1691, he despatched a party of Assiniboines, whom he subsequently overtook; he travelled by water seventy-one miles from Dering's Point and then beached his canoes and continued overland through wooded country for three hundred miles. This brought him to prairie lands for another fifty miles, beyond which he travelled a further eighty, discovering many buffalo and beaver. On one occasion he was attacked by two bears, both of which he shot, to the amazement of the Indians, who named him Miss-top-ashish, or "Little Giant." He had married a woman after the Indian fashion, whom the Governor, on Kelsey's return to York Factory, refused to admit. Kelsey threatened to resign, and the Governor gave way. He had penetrated the interior to no slight extent, taking possession of it on behalf of the Company, and had, first among white men, seen the buffaloes of the plains. The



example of Kelsey was not yet to be followed by other servants of the Company.

When tracing a river to its source we may appropriately explore some of its tributaries ; in like manner, when the discoveries of those who were not servants of the Company have an important bearing upon the development of the Hudson's Bay Company, we may appropriately consider exploits, which, of great interest in themselves, influenced the development of the Company and further opened up the great North-West. The early explorers of unmapped lands frequently sought a result that proved impossible or unachieved, but which had unintended consequences of much greater importance. The idea of a Western Sea, that was thought to lie like a narrow strait between America and Japan, was a will-of-the-wisp beckoning adventurers to the West. In June, 1731, from a little stockaded fort on the banks of the St. Lawrence, where Montreal stands to-day, there set out a party of fifty grizzled adventurers under the leadership of *Sieur Pierre Gaultier de Varennes de la Vérendrye* ; with him were his three sons of eighteen, seventeen, and sixteen years of age. Merchants of Montreal had advanced goods for trade with the Indians in expectation of huge profits ; these were done up in packets of 100 lbs. each, and were stored in the 90 ft. birch canoes, which could be carried on the shoulders of four men. Priests came to bless the departing *voyageurs*, the chapel bells rang out, and then, at a signal from the chief bowman, the paddles swept the water, and the *voyageurs* began one of their famous songs. They passed many scenes where previous adventurers had met their death, and they were aware of the perils that awaited them. After more than a month, the canoes left the Ottawa, passed into Lake Huron, and thence with a favourable breeze to the mouth of Lake Michigan. La Vérendrye had been in this country before ; had been told vague Indian tales of rivers emptying into the Western Sea, and been given, by an old Indian, maps drawn on birchbark, showing the course.

Eleven weeks after leaving Montreal they reached the fur post at Kaministiquia, near what is now Fort William on Lake Superior ; this distance is now covered in two days. The canoe men had received no pay, the winter, with scanty food supplies, would begin in a month, and the *voyageurs* refused to go on. At last it was agreed that if Vérendrye remained with one half at Lake Superior, the rest of the men would go West with Jemmeraie, his second in command. This expedition



erected a fort on Rainy Lake, and drove a thriving trade in furs with the Crees. They returned to Lake Superior in the spring of 1732. Exactly a year from the day he left Montreal, La Vérendrye again started westward, reached Rainy Lake in seven weeks, and was escorted by the Indians to the Lake of the Woods, which he reached in August. Here he built a fort and decided to winter; he was relying upon supplies being brought up by his son and the adventurers were running short when Jean de la Vérendrye arrived. Two cargoes of furs had been sent down and two fur posts established; but the Montreal merchants were dissatisfied and decided to advance provisions only in proportion to earnings. His son pushed forward with a few picked men to Lake Winnipeg, while Vérendrye himself went back and succeeded in convincing the merchants that they must go on with the venture or lose all.

It is easier to feed a few men than many, and the party were distributed in three forts on Rainy Lake, the Lake of the Woods, and Lake Winnipeg. By the spring, one party of the famine-stricken traders were subsisting on parchment, moccasin leather, roots, and their hunting dogs. News came that Jemmeraie had died, and the expedition was in dire straits; it was decided to rush three canoes with twenty *voyageurs* to Michilimackinac, between Lakes Huron and Michigan, for supplies. This little party was attacked by the Sioux one morning when they had landed for breakfast. A few days later bands of Sautaux came to the camping-ground of the French; the heads of the white men lay on a beaver skin; all of them had been scalped, among them Jean Vérendrye, the leader of the relief expedition.

Difficulties of such kinds continued, but the exploration went on. Vérendrye sent his sons forward to reconnoitre the forts where the Assiniboine River joins the Red and the city of Winnipeg stands to-day. Vérendrye himself went back to Montreal with fourteen great canoes of precious furs, and satisfied the merchants, who agreed to make further advances.

Vérendrye made his way back to the site of the city of Winnipeg, and in September, 1738, set out for the height of land lying beyond the sources of the Assiniboine. He went up the Souris River to the Mandan country. He was accompanied by a ragged host of six hundred Indians. They were met by a band of Chiefs, whom it was advisable to impress, so the fifty Frenchmen were drawn up in line and the French flag placed four paces to the fore. At a signal,



DOG CARIOLE.



DOG SLEIGH.





three thundering volleys of musketry were fired ; the Mandans fell back prostrated with fear and wonder. In this fashion white men first took possession of the Upper Missouri. The Mandan Chiefs could tell nothing definite of a Western Sea. Six hundred Assiniboine visitors were a tax on the hospitality of the Mandans, who spread a rumour of a Sioux raid ; the Assiniboines fled, and a little later Vérendrye and his Frenchmen turned back. Two were left to learn the Missouri dialects, and a French flag, in a leaden box with the Arms of France inscribed, was presented to the Mandan Chief. Vérendrye fell terribly ill, but the party had to go on, half-blinded by snow-glare, buffeted by prairie blizzards, huddling in snowdrifts at night, and uncertain of their course. By February, 1739, they reached the fort on Red River.

This spring no food came up from Montreal, and papers had been served for the seizure of the whole of Vérendrye's possessions ; he set out to contest the lawsuits in Montreal. During Vérendrye's absence his sons were not idle. The Mandans guided them to the country of the Crows, who took them on to the Horse Indians ; these in turn guided the French to their next western neighbours, the Bows, who were preparing to war on the Snakes, a mountain tribe still further West. Pierre de la Vérendrye went with the raiders, and in two weeks was at the foot of the Northern Rockies. No Snakes were to be found, and the Bows, fearing they had decamped to massacre the Bow women and children, fled back to their wives.

At the end of July, 1743, the Frenchmen were once more back on the Assiniboine River. For more than twelve years they had followed a hopeless quest ; instead of a Western Sea they had found a sea of prairie, a range of mountains, and two great rivers—the Saskatchewan and the Missouri. The explorer, however, was a ruined man ; jealousy and avarice combined against him in his absence ; his command was given to another, and although later he was decorated with the Order of the Cross of St. Louis, and given permission to continue his exploration, his work was done. While making preparations for the new expedition, he died suddenly at Montreal.

One of the Hudson's Bay servants to win fame as an explorer was Samuel Hearne. He was born in London in 1745, and entered the Navy before he was ten years old. At the end of the Seven Years' War he joined the service of the Hudson's Bay Company and was stationed at Fort Prince of Wales on the Churchill River. Norton,

the Indian Governor of the fort, received instructions from London to despatch his most intrepid explorers for the discovery of unknown rivers, strange lands, rumoured copper-mines, and the North-West Passage that was supposed to lead directly to China. Hearne was one of those who studied the birchbark maps drawn by the Indians, and he undertook to make the adventure. Two attempts failed; on the first of them, when two hundred miles from the fort, Hearne awoke to find his Indian companions marching off with his guns, ammunition, and hatchets. Hearne was left alone with neither ammunition nor food; there was nothing for it but to return. A few weeks later, in February, 1770, he started again with five Indians; they travelled on snowshoes and depended on chance game for food. Presently they were reduced to snow water and pipes of tobacco. The Indians hunted for game while Hearne stayed in his camp, and he thought for a time that he had once again been deserted. Then the Indians came in with the haunches of half-a-dozen deer, and for a time the danger of hunger was over. Hearne's task was the discovery of new lands, the position of which had to be determined. The second trip was ended by his quadrant being blown over and broken. It was useless to go on to the Arctic Circle without instruments with which to take observations. Once more he made his way back to the Churchill River.

Nearing the fort he ran into a splendid Indian Chief, Matonabee, who had long been the ambassador of the Hudson's Bay Company to the Athabascans. At the third attempt Hearne availed himself of the offer, which the Indian had made, to guide the white man to the "Far off Metal"—or Coppermine—river. They left the fort in December, 1770, followed by a party of Indians with dog sleighs, and, on the Chief's advice, accompanied by women, who were needed to snare rabbits, catch partridges, and attend to the camping. Hearne's enemy, hunger, still pursued him; Christmas was celebrated by starvation; but presently the Indians found signs that meant relief from famine. Tufts of hair rubbed off on tree trunks, fallen antlers, and tracks on the snow, told that the caribou were on their yearly journey from East to West. In the Barren Lands they had now reached, they were joined by two hundred warriors. Hearne had the suspicion, afterwards confirmed, that these were on their way to obtain furs from the Eskimos. The women were sent to a rendezvous and the others went on under great difficulties, which caused half the



Indians to turn back. Hearne, Matonabee, and the others held on their course. On June 21st the sun did not set ; the Arctic Circle had been reached. A month later the explorers reached the mouth of the Coppermine River, on the Arctic Ocean. Here Hearne erected a mark, and took possession of the coast on behalf of the Hudson's Bay Company. This time Hearne had his quadrant, but either it was badly damaged, or the explorer was unskilled in its use, for the position which he gave proved subsequently to be very inaccurate. On the way down the Coppermine River, Hearne witnessed a massacre of Eskimos by his Indian companions ; horror robbed Hearne of his exultation as an explorer ; and even from this point of view the result was disappointing. He was in quest of a North-West Passage, and the Coppermine was not the way to it, but Hearne supposed that he had put an end to the disputes concerning it, a conclusion that was doubtless not unwelcome to the Governor and Committee in London, who were being attacked for not seeking the Passage, the discovery of which was one of the objects of the Charter.

Turning South, Hearne reached Lake Athabasca on Christmas Eve ; there they found a woman who had escaped from an Indian band which had taken her prisoner ; she had not seen a human face for seven months, and had lived by snaring partridges, rabbits and squirrels. Such a picture tells the nature of the territory Hearne had discovered—the Coppermine River, the Arctic Ocean, and the Athabasca country—a region in all as large as half European Russia. After an absence of a little more than eighteen months he was back at Fort Prince of Wales, of which less than a year later, on the death of Norton, Hearne became the Governor.

In 1782 the Fort was attacked by the French with forces against which Hearne could do nothing but surrender ; he was taken prisoner, but reached England in 1787 and died there five years later.

Matonabee was absent when the French came ; he returned to find in ruins the fort where he had spent his life, and the English, whom he thought invincible, defeated and prisoners of war. Withdrawing from observation the brave old Chief blew out his brains.

A little north of Lake Athabasca, which figures so prominently in the story of the fur trade, is the Great Slave Lake, the waters of which are emptied into the Arctic Ocean through what is now known as the great Mackenzie River. Studded along the banks of the Mackenzie there have long been, and there still are, numerous forts



belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company. The river was not, however, discovered by the Company's servants. Alexander Mackenzie was connected with the North-West Company, which was subsequently absorbed by the Hudson's Bay Company. The partners of the North-West Company seemed to have had no great liking for Mackenzie and sent him to the distant Fort Chipewyan on Lake Athabasca. He saw one great river flowing North and another West, and he determined to follow their courses. The British Government had offered a reward of £20,000 to anyone who should discover a North-West Passage between the Atlantic and the Pacific. Perhaps Mackenzie was more eager to win the honour of discovery than the reward; but, be this how it may, he set out northwards in 1789, and, after many difficulties, reached Great Slave Lake, whence flow two rivers, both of which were then unknown. He chose the one to the West. The perils were too much for the Indian guides, who had to be compelled by force to continue, and who escaped whenever the opportunity offered. Four Canadians, who were with Mackenzie, besought him to return, since they saw impending the necessity for wintering in the Arctic north unless they quickly made their way back. Mackenzie had no intention of leaving his enterprise unfinished, but promised to return if they did not reach the sea within a week. That night the sun did not set, and Mackenzie, like Hearne a little while before, had reached the Arctic Circle. On the night of July 13th the travellers found their baggage floating in rising water; they had reached the tide, and found the sea. This was another part of the Arctic Ocean than that which Hearne had reached by the Coppermine River sixteen years before. Mackenzie's men indulged in a whale hunt in their frail canoes, and then, having erected the inevitable mark, set out on the return journey to Fort Chipewyan. It had taken six weeks to reach the Arctic, and it took eight to return against the stream. Once again the North-West Passage had not been found. Mackenzie reported his discovery of the great river to the partners of the North-West Company, who received it with utter indifference.

Undeterred, Mackenzie asked, and obtained, permission to explore the river which flows to Lake Athabasca from the West—the Peace River. He went to England to study astronomy and surveying for his next expedition, and was now fired with the same enthusiasm to find the Western Sea, that had sustained Vérendrye through long years of danger and disappointment. It was on May 9th, 1793, that Mackenzie,

with Mackay as first assistant, six Canadians and two Indians, started on Peace River. The water flooded with the spring thaw tore down from the mountains. In less than a week, snowcapped peaks crowded the canoe into a narrow cañon where the river was a wild sheet of tossing foam for as far as the eye could see. It seemed impossible to land; but Mackenzie somehow got ashore and with an axe cut footholds on the face of the cliff and signalled to his men to follow. The canoe seemed likely to be smashed to pieces and the tow-line snapped, but by good fortune the canoe was driven ashore and the tow-line regained. The men bluntly declared that it was absurd to go on; but Mackenzie paid no heed to the murmurings. He gave them the best feast he could and went ahead to explore. For as far as he could see there was a continuous succession of cataracts walled in by stupendous precipices; to avoid them they must go nine miles over the mountain. It took one day to travel three miles. Once, when Mackenzie and Mackay had gone ahead with the Indians, the Canadians deserted them, and the leaders were left with no food and little ammunition. After a time the Canadians were found, and though Mackenzie said nothing, he took care not again to allow the crew out of his sight.

[The party met some Indians and learned that the Divide had been crossed; but the future course was doubtful. A river that they reached ran South, not West. As a matter of fact, he was on the sources of the Fraser, that winds South through the mountains before turning West into the Pacific. The Indians said it ran for "many moons" through the "shining mountains" before it reached the "mid-day sun." Mackenzie learnt from the Indians that, by somewhat retracing his steps, he could reach the sea overland in eleven days.] He frankly laid the difficulties before his followers, declaring that he was going on alone, and that they need not accompany him unless they voluntarily decided to do so. His courage was contagious and the whole party went on. With much difficulty, they crossed the last range of mountains and then embarked with some Indians for the sea. It was on July 20th, 1793, that Mackenzie came to the Western Sea which, for three hundred years, had defied all approach from overland. The point he reached was near Cape Menzies.

There were ten men on a barbarous coast, with 20 lbs. of pemmican, 15 lbs. of rice, 6 lbs. of flour, and scarcely any ammunition. They had a leaky canoe, and between them and their homes lay half a continent of wilderness and mountains. Mixing up a pot of vermilion, Mackenzie



painted his name and the date on the face of a rock. A little more than a month later they were back at the fort.

In the following winter Mackenzie left the West for good. He published the story of his travels, and was knighted by the English King. He died in 1820, on an estate in Scotland where he had lived quietly for some years.

The year previous to Mackenzie's arrival at the Pacific coast by land, it had been surveyed by George Vancouver, the English navigator. In 1791 he went from Falmouth to Australia and New Zealand, and, after spending some time at the Hawaiian Islands, sighted California in April, 1792. He went far up the coast and circumnavigated Vancouver Island, which is named after him.

In 1805, and twice in 1811, the Pacific was reached overland down the Columbia River, while in 1808 Simon Fraser approached it by the great river that bears his name. Mackenzie, as we have seen, reached the Fraser River, but it was taking him South when his wish was to go West, and he left it for a land march and a journey down the Bella Coola River.

It was not till one hundred and twenty-three years after the granting of the Charter that a white man crossed from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Only five expeditions by men of British stock had reached the Western Sea by land by 1811. The Hudson's Bay Company had existed for more than one hundred years when the limits of Canada were first vaguely discovered.

With the close of the eighteenth century the boundaries of the Dominion had been found. The story of "Life in the Service of the Company" will tell something of how the details were filled in; will suggest under what difficulties, and at what cost, Canada was made.



LEAD COINS OF THE COMPANY, REPRESENTING THE VALUE OF BEAVER SKINS.



# Life in the Service



It is no easy matter to give in a few pages any vivid impression of life in the service of the Company. It is passed in a territory which extends from Labrador to British Columbia, and from the Arctic Circle to the boundary line. It is lived by rivers, lakes and oceans, under widely different conditions of climate and temperature. The character of the Indians varies with the locality, as does plant and animal life. Some of the posts are comparatively accessible; others are remote; while, if this sketch is not to be too incomplete, we must take account of the changes, sometimes great and sometimes little, that have taken place since service in the Company began in the time of the Stuarts. Perhaps even more significant is the influence of the life upon the different types of men who have shared it. For the most part they came to it young, but, even so, their previous mode of life must have affected their attitude towards it. They may have been sent from quiet districts in the Orkneys, or have come from busy towns. In other cases they may have grown up in a Hudson's Bay atmosphere through family connections with the service. They may remain in it for a few years, or for a lifetime, and, in almost all cases, it is calculated to have a dominating influence upon their character and their future. To use a modern illustration, we need a long series of cinematograph films, but must, perforce, take an isolated picture here and there as typical of the whole. Even were the films themselves available, they would show us only the externals of the life and not the more important features and consequences which have brought the Company into the position it occupies to-day, and have to so large an extent shaped the past and future of a great part of Canada.

The life often affords a large amount of leisure, and the men are thrown upon their own resources. One result has been that many of them have kept journals, or written long letters home, and much material is available for sketching the nature of the life in different places and at various times. There are, too, many opportunities for listening to the accounts given by men who are in the service to-day, or have been so in the past. Comparing the one with the other it is somewhat surprising to find the large measure of similarity between the conditions of to-day and those of a long time back.

Year by year, from the earliest days of the Company, supplies obtained in London were placed on one or more of the Company's ships in the Thames. The vessels sailed round the north of Scotland, perhaps embarking at Stornaway, or elsewhere, apprentice-clerks and others, who would sail for weeks across the Atlantic to Hudson Strait, and make their way through the ice to Moose, or York, Factory.

The "outfit" for 1672 was two hundred fowling-pieces with powder and shot, as many brass kettles, twelve gross of knives, and a thousand hatchets. The trade was, and for the greater part still is, conducted by barter, modified, however, in later times by what may be called a temporary currency. The visits of the Indians were mostly paid during the short summer when the rivers were free from ice, though natives from the neighbourhood occasionally came to the factories in the winter; they entered the forts three or four at a time and delivered their goods to the traders, who, alone of the Company's servants, were permitted to have direct intercourse with the Indians. The traders examined the furs and stated what they were prepared to give in exchange. Eight to twelve beaver skins would be taken for a gun; one beaver for half-a-pound of powder, for a pound of tobacco, or half a pound of beads. For some while the amount of the payment was left to the discretion of the Chief Factor, but, before the end of the seventeenth century, a standard was approved by the Company, and though not always strictly adhered to—deviations being to the personal advantage of the trader—some approximation to uniformity was introduced. This ultimately developed into a nominal standard, called a "castor," or a "made beaver," or a "skin."

The Indians are frequently employed in the posts, and are engaged as interpreters, and even traders. For many such services they are paid in dollars, but for the fur<sup>r</sup> trade the standard of the beaver is still maintained.

In the early years the wants of the Indians were comparatively few, and simple barter sufficed. Little by little, however, the contents of the stores became more varied; the Indians could see cloth, capotes, blankets, caps, shirts, guns, powder horns, knives, hatchets, kettles, needles, pins, scissors, thimbles, fish hooks, paint, string, glass beads, and bewildering varieties of other odds and ends.

In these circumstances mere barter became inconvenient. The trader having assessed the value of the furs at, say, sixty "made beavers," handed the Indian sixty sticks, quills, or other tokens, each representing





AN OLD WOODEN CART.



AN OLD FUR PRESS.





one beaver ; the Indian would look round and select what he wanted, handing over the tokens representing the price ; never by any chance would he quit the store without having expended the whole of his temporary coinage.

This process does not exhaust the ability of the Indians to obtain supplies. They are given goods on credit and seldom make default. Even if one of them dies his family will pay the debt. The Company's servants know the character and reputation of each, what their circumstances are and where they live.

Under such a system as this it is not easy to form any clear idea of the annual income of an Indian family ; it may perhaps represent at the present time anything from £150 to £1,000, but they exhibit curious characteristics which greatly diminish the value to them of the benefits they earn. On the one hand, in days when prices varied more than now, an Indian would think nothing of making a difficult journey of fifty miles if he thought that by doing so he could obtain an extra pound of powder. What these journeys meant may be judged from the fact that in the earlier years the French traders dealt almost exclusively in light furs, because of the easier transit, and that the Indians, bringing the heavier furs to the Company's settlements, frequently became so weakened by hunger that they used to throw overboard all but the most valuable skins rather than undergo the labour of incessant portages.

In spite of the difficulty of obtaining the goods, the Indians take but little care of them ; they will rest a valuable gun against a tree in the pouring rain until it is so damaged as to become useless. Out of mere bravado, and by way of boasting of their wealth, they have been known to burn, or otherwise destroy, large quantities of their most precious possessions, including, on some occasions in the past, a number of their slaves.

Considering these things, it is not perhaps surprising that the Governor and Committee in London scarcely understood the ways of the Indians two centuries ago. The Governor at one of the forts, being instructed to keep the Indians from warring with one another that they might bring a larger quantity of furs to the factory, replied that "perhaps your Honours will tell me how I am going to do it." The Committee devoted a whole meeting to the consideration of the matter, and decided that nothing was easier, provided its instructions were implicitly obeyed : "Tell them what advantages they may make," wrote the

Committee ; “ that the more furs they bring, the more goods they will be able to purchase of us, which will enable them to live more comfortably and keep them from want in a time of scarcity. Inculcate better morals than they yet understand ; tell them that it doth nothing advantage them to kill and destroy one another, that thereby they may so weaken themselves that the wild, ravenous beasts may grow too numerous for them, and destroy them that survive.” It is unlikely that this message was communicated to the Indians, and the governor of the factory had to inform the Company that fewer natives had come down than usual because they expected to be attacked by their enemies. The Committee had a simple remedy. The tribe beginning the next quarrel was not to be supplied with powder and shot ; this “ will expose them to their enemies, who will have the master of them and quite destroy them from the earth, them and their wives and children. This,” added the secretary, “ must work some terror amongst them.”

All through the earlier history of the Company the conduct of the fur trade and the nature of the life in the service were greatly affected by the existence of numerous, and, at times, exceedingly powerful rivals. It was not to be expected that the Charter of the English King would be recognised either by the French, or by the small groups of fur traders who had long been carrying on the business. These men were largely financed by Montreal traders, and many of them, under no control, and living much among the Indians, were devoid of all social and humane ties, and were slaves to many vices, especially drunkenness. The natural consequence was that the Indians preferred to deal with the Company rather than with the rival fur traders. Until about 1782 the Indians of Athabasca, for example, took their furs regularly to Fort Churchill, in spite of the journey of five or six months, in the course of which they were reduced to painful extremities, and often lost their lives from hunger and fatigue.

On the other hand the Company in its early years was not enterprising ; its rivals went amongst the Indians, and by unscrupulous devices induced them to part with their furs in exchange for goods inferior to those which could be obtained at the Company's posts.

In 1784 the Montreal merchants effected a junction of interests, and organised the fur trade with extreme efficiency. Two prominent traders held aloof, and were fortunate in obtaining the services of Alexander Mackenzie, the famous explorer, who was later to write an account of his journeys, and receive the honour of knighthood.



In the year 1787 these two parties joined forces, and the North-West Company had no important rival other than the Hudson's Bay Company. The merchants and the actual traders were partners, and provision was made for the younger men to secure a share and a vote by the time the apprenticeship was finished, and sometimes even before.

In the closing years of the eighteenth century difficulties and dissensions began in the ranks of the Northmen, and the opposing factions ranged themselves on the side of Mackenzie or McTavish. After a visit to England, Mackenzie returned to Canada in 1801 and established the New North-West Company popularly known as the X.Y. Co., from the letters marked on their packages.

McTavish and his allies were not long in challenging the Chartered Company on the Bay itself, and constructed posts on Charlton Island and at the mouth of Moose River. The Indians, however, merely smiled at the Northmen and their goods, told them to return to other tribes who were ignorant of values, and continued to trade with the old Company which could, and did, give better terms than the newcomers.

In the meanwhile Mackenzie had been in London endeavouring to obtain from the British Government a license, or charter, for "The Fishery and Fur Company," which was to combine fishing in the Pacific with the fur trade of the interior. But successful competition with the Chartered Company was even more difficult in London than in Canada.

The North-West and X.Y. Companies amalgamated in 1804 and entered on a course of aggression against the Hudson's Bay traders, whom they hoped to drive out of all the valuable fur districts. It was the aim of the members of the coalition to obtain the chartered rights for themselves.

The policy of the Hudson's Bay Company of practically compelling the Indians to make long journeys to the trading posts was not without advantage. It had long been recognised that the winter was the best season for hunting fur-bearing animals, and a long excursion in the summer suspended operations while the animals reared their young and when the fur was of inferior quality. The Hudson's Bay Company's furs were recognised as the best in the European markets and they won a prestige corresponding with that which the Company gained among the Indians. The Nor'-Westers, on the other hand,

were too improvident to abstain from killing the breeding animals or their young ; the numbers were rapidly diminished, and the natives over-awed by the Northmen, witnessed the destruction without daring to intervene.

As against the servants of the Company, the Nor'-Westers did not hesitate to employ violence, systematic robbery, and even murder. They endeavoured to prevent the Indians having access to the Company's posts ; destroyed fishing lines and nets, on which subsistence largely depended ; stole weapons, ammunition, and furs, and tried—but in vain—to terrorise the servants of the Company as they had the Indians.

The competition between the Chartered Company and the Nor'-Westers was not always of this character ; their trading posts were frequently close together, and the representatives of the two rivals had much friendly intercourse. They visited each other, and especially during the Christmas holidays, parties and balls were continually given, sometimes, however, with a motive. On one occasion the Hudson's Bay men discovered the tracks of Indians in the snow returning from a hunting expedition. The Northmen were forthwith invited to a great ball, and the guests were soon busy with revelry and Scottish reels. Outside, the scene was very different ; dog sledges were prepared, goods for barter were packed, the sleigh-bells were detached, and four sledges set out over the snow.

On the following day the Nor'-West scouts reported the arrival of the Indians, and a set of sleighs set out from the fort with loudly-ringing bells. After a march of forty miles they reached the Indians' encampment only to find there was not a skin left to repay them for their trouble. They understood the invitation to the ball.

It was not long before an opportunity presented itself for revenge. Two rival parties on the way to trade with the Indians met and exchanged compliments. They lighted a huge pile of logs, produced the canteen, and told their stories and adventures while the liquor mounted to their brains. Presently the Nor'-Westers commenced to spill their grog on the snow, and kept tolerably sober, while the Hudson's Bay party continued drinking, and fell asleep. They were tied firmly upon their sledges, the dogs were turned homewards, and took the men, still sound asleep, to the Hudson's Bay fort. The Nor'-Westers started for the Indian camp, and this time, at least, had the furs all to themselves.



We give elsewhere a sketch of the difficulties in which the Hudson's Bay Company found itself early in the nineteenth century ; as well as of the appearance upon the scene of the Earl of Selkirk with his project for the Red River Settlement ; and we tell how the difficulties were ultimately settled by the amalgamation of the Hudson's Bay and North-West Companies in 1821.

It has been well said that " For keen, hard, shrewd efficiency the North-West Company was perhaps the most terribly effective organisation that had ever arisen in the New World." In opposition to it the methods of the Hudson's Bay Company often seemed ineffective, but they were not so in reality and in the long run. Had the Nor'-Westers become supreme, it is by no means improbable that, considering the character of the men in their employment, the fur trade would have been killed by the extermination of the fur-bearing animals ; the Indians would have been reduced to want ; the gradual settlement of the country would have been opposed ; and the civilisation and progress of the North-West would have been at least deferred, or of a different character. In this matter, and in those days, London was wiser than Montreal and Fort William, and the consequences are felt to-day throughout Western Canada.

The heads of the companies had come to an agreement, but there remained the task of bringing together the servants of the two rivals ; they had long been antagonists ; their methods, and, to a great extent, their nationalities, were different. Fortunately the man for the work was available. This was George Simpson, who had spent but one winter at Lake Athabasca. He was free from the prejudices of both parties and young enough to be adaptable to new conditions ; he combined ease and affability of manner with inflexibility of will ; he made long journeys from post to post with much ceremony and display, but, recognising that he was engaged in trade, he inspected the posts and the accounts with the utmost thoroughness ; was accessible to every employee ; had a keen eye for able men, and stern reprimand for the inefficient.

The Nor'-West partners had had annual meetings first at Grand Portage and afterwards at Fort William ; Simpson determined to continue the practice, and chose Norway House, to the north of Lake Winnipeg, for the scene of the annual Council. This he ruled by appearing to defer to it. He travelled much throughout the Company's territories, and organised and consolidated the forts and the activities.



A record remains of his journey in 1828 from York Factory, on Hudson Bay, to Fort Vancouver, on the Columbia River. In two light canoes, with nine men in each, he went along the waterways with extraordinary speed, and quickly reached Norway House. The residents were on the look-out for the important visitor ; the Company's flag was flying on Signal Hill, and large numbers of Indians assembled for the arrival of the " Kitche Okema." As the canoes came in view of the Post, the strains of the bagpipes were heard, and the sound of the Chief Factor's bugle, while the *voyageurs* sang one of their famous chansons.

After a thorough inspection, Simpson proceeded to Fort Chipewyan on Lake Athabasca and thence to Peace River and the Rockies. One fort after another was visited and inspected ; caution and advice were given to the Indians, and, after four days on the Fraser, he reached Kamloops at the junction of the Thompson Rivers. Simpson proceeded to Fort Vancouver, then the chief post on the Pacific Coast, and returned in the following year. Establishments in unnecessary and unremunerative places were cut down or closed, and the strong personality of the " Commander-in-Chief " had impressed itself upon the servants of the Company, and upon the Indians, throughout a huge area.

+ We have no space in which to follow the subsequent career of George Simpson. For forty years he was a power throughout the land ; he travelled round the world ; was knighted by Queen Victoria, and at last retired to Montreal. He organised an expedition to the Arctic ; lifted the fur trade out of the depths into which it had fallen, and harmonised the hostile elements of the two companies.

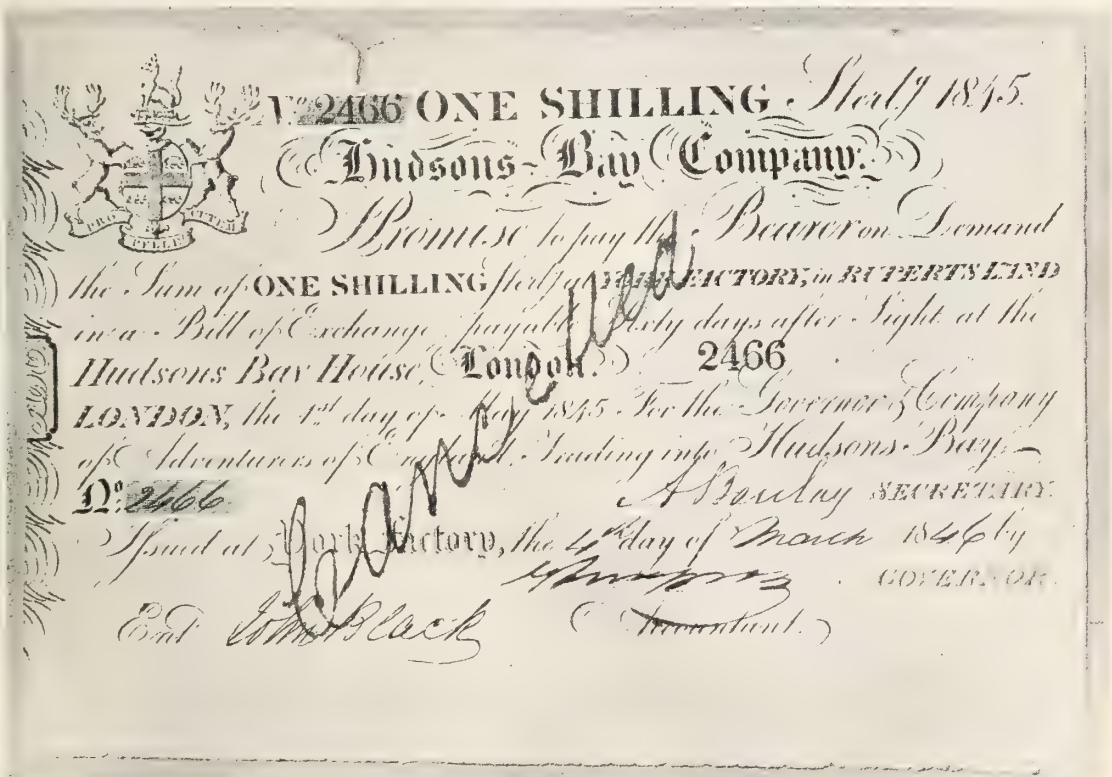
We may turn from his achievements to those of less famous servants of the Company. In the larger establishments the staffs engaged were fairly numerous, but in smaller places the life was lonely in the extreme, visitors were rare, and journeys infrequent.

We can obtain some idea of the conditions by imagining Great Britain converted into a wilderness and planted in the middle of the Company's territory. There would be three forts in it, one at Land's End, one in Wales, and one in the Highlands. The population would be some thirty men, half-a-dozen women, and a few children.

Naturally, in so large a service, the officials were divided into ranks, or grades, and were subject to discipline. The apprentice-clerk, who might be a boy fresh from school, served for five years before becoming a clerk ; this was followed after a still longer period by promotion to the rank of chief trader, or half-shareholder ; and then to that of chief factor, or shareholder.



THE GOVERNOR OF RED RIVER IN A LIGHT CANOE, 1824.



A SPECIMEN OF A NOTE ISSUED BY THE COMPANY.





The plan of giving the officials a share in the profits of the Company was copied from the Nor'-Westers and was adopted by the Hudson's Bay Company a few years before the fusion.

The life, especially of the juniors, is of course greatly influenced by the character of the traders and factors. In times gone by the rule of some of these men was harsh and brutal; they were martinets—a word which preserves the name of a very strict French General in the reign of Louis XIV.—of the same type as were common in the Navy and Army in the days of the press gang, and of still later times. To-day, discipline and efficiency are obtained by pleasanter methods.

No record gives us the atmosphere of the service better than Ballantyne's "*Hudson Bay*." The origin of his connection with the Company is of interest; his father was reading in the newspapers an account of the expedition of Dease and Simpson to the Arctic regions, to which we refer in connection with Fort Chipewyan. The boy was asked "How would you like to go into the service of the Hudson's Bay Company and discover the North-West Passage?" As a result young Ballantyne sailed for Hudson Bay in 1841, when he was sixteen years of age. He remained with the Company for only six years, which were spent at York Factory, Norway House, Fort Garry, Tadoussac at the mouth of the Saguenay, and at Seven Islands on the Gulf of St. Lawrence with no companion but a French-Canadian servant, and no neighbour within seventy miles. With nothing to read, no game to shoot, and no boat for fishing, he took to writing, and in the end became a prolific and successful author.

Many of the Company's officials took, or made, the opportunity of obtaining the latest books, and references are frequent in old letters to the writings of Sir Walter Scott—there were many Scotsmen in the service—to volumes of history, and other standard works. Some became keen students of the history, customs, and traditions of the Indians; others were naturalists, to whose observations and experiences writers on biology are indebted. Another type found its chief interest in exploration and adventure; they followed in the tracks of the earlier discoverers, like Hearne and Mackenzie, and filled in the details which of necessity were at first omitted.

In the chapter on Exploration and Discovery we have seen something of the mode of travelling. The greatest use is made of the rivers and lakes, the journeys on which are by no means free from danger. After a time the frail birchbark canoes were replaced by

larger boats, but even these have to hug the shores of the lakes, or the travellers have to remain on land in rough weather. The rivers are frequently swift, and against the stream men have to indulge in the arduous work of tracking; half the crew land with a rope, and in spells of an hour at a time draw the boat slowly against the current. At frequent intervals the way is blocked by impassable waterfalls, and the crews disembark and carry the canoes and their contents to the upper reaches of the river.

In the winter there are long journeys over the snow, sometimes to carry to the distant forts letters from home, or instructions from the officers of the Company. At other times in the winter small trading parties go among the Indians, taking goods for barter on sleighs and returning with the furs. The messengers make long journeys on snowshoes, carrying but little with them, camping constantly in the snow, and not infrequently suffering from hunger. The journeys, both for the servants of the Company and for the Indians, are much shorter than they used to be. Under the old policy of the Hudson's Bay Company the trading posts were few and far between, and the journeys to them took weeks or months. Now there are but few districts in which the journey to a trading-post takes more than a few days.

During the rivalry with the Nor'-Westers, the Company supplied alcohol to the Indians; but, as the result of a revolting brawl witnessed by Governor Simpson, an order was issued that no strong drink should be supplied.

In varying degree, according to locality, the Company supplies the needs of the Indians. Some of the simplest and best-known medicines are available at the posts; at the larger stations the doctor is a recognised officer; and both directly and indirectly missionary work and education are promoted. Especially at Christmas, there is as much social life as the different circumstances of the various forts permit, and the Indians, to their great satisfaction, are invited to share in the festivities.

It is a hard life but a healthy one, and in the main it forms strong and self-reliant characters. When it ends, the retired servants frequently remain in the country; many of them, a century ago, took up holdings at Red River; now they range farther afield and become settlers who, with their children, have done, and still do, much to mould the character of Canadian life.



# Indians



FOR most of us from the days of childhood the word "Indians" is associated with ideas of adventure and romance, while to the student it suggests a long story of surpassing interest. The name had its origin in a letter written by Columbus in 1493, soon after the discovery of the New World. It was due to the explorer's belief that the islands which he had discovered, by sailing westward across the Atlantic, were actually a part of India. We have told elsewhere how the old geographical ignorance drew the people of previous centuries to the search for the Western Sea and the North-West Passage, and how the discoveries made under the influence of mistaken ideas were greater than any that could have resulted, had the old notions been true.

Within the territories under the sway of the Hudson's Bay Company there are many Indian stocks, among which we may be permitted to include, for descriptive purposes, the Eskimos. Some of the stocks include numerous tribes, and the tribes are made up of individuals, with different characters and dispositions, a few of whom have attained to distinction, not merely as Indians, but in free competition with a larger world.

The manners, customs, and thoughts have changed greatly during the two hundred and fifty years in which the tribes have been in contact with the servants of the Company. The natives have been an essential part of the fur trade, which has drawn white men to the Indians' country, and thus the Indians have been unconscious agents in producing the settlement of large areas, the growth of great cities, and the construction of railroads across the prairies.

We cannot generalise about the different stocks, and tribes, and periods without the risk—if not the certainty—of producing a wrong impression. Much of the most useful and interesting information comes to us from missionaries and explorers of the past, many of whom betray considerable bias, more often in favour of the Indians than against them. The old writers are also likely to lead us astray because they were less on their guard than the scientific students of to-day against reading their own thoughts and ideas into the traditions and beliefs of the Indians. If we set out to obtain from primitive folk



definite ideas and a coherent system, they may, in obliging answers to leading questions, give us what we are seeking for, but it will be no true conception of the native mind, which is vague and not definite. Although a coherent body of tradition may be non-existent, yet there is generally some congruity between tradition, custom and experience; there is always some "soul of truth in things erroneous," if only we can take the native point of view and find the right perspective.

The aspect of the subject with which we are here concerned is the nature of the intercourse, from the seventeenth century onwards, between the Indians and the Company; the way in which each has modified the other, and the combined effect upon the development of Canada. The natural impulse is to attribute the greatest importance to what may be called the "large scale" events, and to think unduly little of the continual association and everyday life. It has been said that "In their contact with the Indians, Europeans of the New World had many lessons in diplomacy and statecraft. Alliances entered upon chiefly for commercial reasons led sometimes to important national events. The adhesion of the Algonkian tribes so largely to the French, and of the Iroquoian peoples as extensively to the English, practically settled which was ultimately to win in the struggle for supremacy in North America." If we believe Lewis H. Morgan, "the Iroquois alliance with the English forms the chief fact in American history down to 1763."

This is a type of what we mean by a "large scale" event, and, if the above reading is right, the consequence is significant enough. Yet we can also see results of great moment from the continuous co-operation in the fur trade between the Company and the Indians. Without an army, with a few scattered forts possessing a few guns and a powder-magazine, the Company ruled, and in one sense conquered, a huge territory. It brought the Indians many things that they wanted; it fed them often in times of famine, when they would otherwise have starved; it gave them greater power over animals. It has brought to the Indians some measure of education, and has enabled many of them to attain to comfort and affluence. Doubtless the benefits have sometimes been accompanied by drawbacks of various kinds; but in the end, and for countless individuals over more than two centuries, the good has been predominant. When we come to think of it, the achievement is an astounding one,

and its full effects cannot be judged until later generations see, more fully; even than we can, the true significance of the growth of Western Canada.

In order to acquire and retain the confidence and the respect of the Indians it was necessary for the Company's servants to display many notable qualities. Hostility, or difficult situations, might arise at any moment and a white man must be equal to the occasion. One of the things the Indian fears is fearlessness, and want of courage, or resolution, on the part of any one of the Company's servants would jeopardise not only his own influence but that of the Company as a whole, and it might even be the lives of others in the service. Hence the importance of accompanying justice by sternness. The custom of requiring life for life is almost universal among the Indians, but, in revenge for the death of a relative, the Indian does not in all cases seek the actual offender; any relative, however distant, would serve the purpose. Should the offender be a white man, the Indian would probably kill the first white man he could find. It would only be slowly, if at all, that the Indians would come to understand different methods from those to which they were accustomed.

The wilder spirits of the rival fur traders not infrequently subjected themselves to attacks by Indians. In the Eagle Hills in 1780 some of these men were indulging in revelry amidst a body of Indians. One of the traders purposely gave laudanum to an Indian instead of grog; the savage staggered a few steps and died; the sun went down on the corpses of seven of the trading party, and the rest of them took to flight.

It was rare in the extreme for any servant of the Company to be the aggressor at any time, and there are occasions when a Chief Factor, having recognised that one of his subordinates was at fault and had suffered in consequence, mitigated the retaliation on the Indians, or did not seek it.

Sometimes when difficulties arose between the Company and the Indians, it would be due to a state of mind not always easy to follow; as when much trouble occurred at Mountain House with the Blackfoot Indians on account of their enemies the Crees having been supplied with guns and powder. It was unintelligible that both antagonists should be armed by the Company. Little by little, however, it became known that the Company would insist upon the punishment of offenders if justice required it. The prairie was wide and forests were trackless,



but there was no haven for the horse-thief, the incendiary, or the murderer. The Company made it its business to find and punish the real offender—not his friends or his tribe—and the punishment was certain. Blood was paid for in blood, and there was no trial. Often a factor, a trader, or a clerk would, alone, enter a hostile camp, shoot the malefactor, and walk away to the nearest fort ; the white man's justice had the power of a superstition over the Indian mind.

Such action, and indeed all the intercourse with the Indians, called for strong character, shrewd judgment, and an experience that became a tradition in the Company's service. The nature of the Indians, and the appropriate methods of dealing with them, naturally varied according to circumstances. In particular much depended upon whether the tribes were peaceful or warlike. When, as among the Chippewas, one of the Algonquin tribes, the chief ambition was to be a successful warrior, force was the only language that was understood, and greatness was measured by the number of scalps a warrior had taken. The older chivalry prescribed that a scalp could only be taken after a fair fight, and, to facilitate the operation, the braves wore long war-locks, or scalping tufts, as an implied challenge. In contrast with this state of things is a widespread practice among the peaceful Eskimos, who frequently decide their quarrels by a match of singing and dancing, which they call a "Singing Combat." If one man thinks himself aggrieved by another, he composes a satirical poem which he teaches to his family, especially the women, and then challenges his antagonist to a satirical duel ; there is no restraint so effectual as the dread of public disgrace.

The majority of Indian tribes lack all forms of permanent control by Chiefs or others, and social ostracism is a powerful weapon that is extensively used. There is a story of a party of Chipewyan Indians visiting one of the distant posts in Athabasca, and evidently having some serious trouble on their minds. At last they told the trader a revolting story of cannibalism by one of their members ; this man subsequently appeared, and afterwards left the post with the rest ; he was not molested, but from wherever he pitched his tent, the others moved away.

There is no reason for supposing that, even in the remote past, cannibalism was extensively practised among the Indian tribes ; they might be driven to it by extreme hunger, as in the case of a man early in the eighteenth century who was driven to eating his



children, only to be overcome by lasting remorse. They might sink to it after the excitement of fighting or under the influence of strong drink.

Just as the tribes as a whole seldom work under any tribal discipline, so the children in most Indian families are hardly ever punished or rebuked. It is this widespread absence of either family, or tribal, coercion, or control, that has made the Indian practically untameable, and insistent upon his freedom at all costs. We may wonder at the consequences of this lack of discipline, but they are well attested by many observers.

It is no easy matter to judge of the character and disposition of Indians on account of their extreme reserve in the presence of white men ; while they throw over all their feelings a veil of iron self-control, they will, on the other hand, beg for the smallest trifle, or receive with every mark of pleasure the leavings of a traveller's meal. Yet among themselves many of the tribes are eminently sociable. A hunter who has been lucky enough to kill three or four moose will invite his neighbours to a feast that may last for days. Some of them are extremely appreciative of a joke, and they indulge much in games, among which games of chance often take a prominent place ; sometimes an Indian will gamble away every article he possesses, including his tomahawk, his medal, his ornaments, and even his blanket.

It is well known that a large number of the Indians are extremely keen observers and have an almost photographic memory for detail ; they can describe accurately a trail which they may have followed forty years previously and not have seen since ; the description will be by means of trees, rocks, or other objects, which the ordinary white man would scarcely notice. They can recognise other tribes at long distances by shape, colour, legs, knees, or feet. They know the tracks of animals in the snow, or on the ground, and can reconstruct a whole story from trivial indications, in a way which the acutest detectives might envy.

For their own use, and perhaps still more for the benefit of travellers, they draw maps on bark which are readily understood, even though no attempt is made to draw them to scale. Schoolcraft tells us that one map which he saw represented one mile of a river by the same length as a distance of six hundred miles to a lake. There was nothing to show that one part was nearer to the spectator than another, yet the meaning was readily grasped.

Distances on a journey are measured by the number of nights taken, longer periods of time are measured by moons, and years are counted by winters.

At night they guide themselves by the stars, from which they learn to keep their direction, and regain it if they lose their way. Among the Iroquois the favourite guide in the fall and winter is the cluster of the Pleiades, as it has been in all ages in all parts of the world. The Eskimos will tell you—pointing from one star to another—“When that star gets where that one is we will start.”

The Indians can dispense with the use of a compass by a method which at first surprised some of the Company's servants. They know that the trees all bend to the south, and that the branches on the south side are larger and stronger than on the north. The bark is also thicker on different sides, and by making two cuts and comparing the thickness, they determine their direction.

Although this suggests a knowledge of what we call the points of the compass, it was found quite impossible to explain a compass to some Chipewyans on a visit to Churchill River; they insisted it was merely a toy, and all they were told about it only made them laugh. Yet they are sometimes very inquisitive about the strange objects which, in the early days, the white men showed them; they were puzzled about iron, and wanted to know where the wood was obtained that was hard enough to make the axes. When the Eskimos first saw glass they mistook it for ice and thought it would melt in their mouths; it was hard, smooth, and transparent, and, so far as the comparisons went they were correct. They were greatly puzzled by woollen clothing, asked of what kind of skins it was made, and were unable to comprehend that it was not made of skin at all. They took watches and musical instruments for living creatures, a musical snuff-box being, in their opinion, the child of a hand-organ.

Here we touch one of the most widespread beliefs among all Indian tribes, and indeed among primitive races in general. To the Indian mind almost everything is imbued with life; the trees, waterfalls, rapids, grasses, sun, moon, and stars are all alive. This is almost inevitable to people who have no conception of what we call natural law, and is encouraged by experiences of dreams, trances, echoes, shadows, reflections, and many other phenomena. Knowing nothing of the reflection of sound waves a native, on hearing an echo as he passes the high bank of a river, naturally supposes that some living being is





INDIAN HOUSES, SHOWING ENTRANCE THROUGH  
BOTTOM OF TOTEM POLE.

GREAT CHIEF OF "BLOODS,"  
BLACKFOOT CONFEDERACY.



INDIAN  
BURYING  
GROUND.  
THE  
WOODEN  
IMAGES  
REPRESENT  
THE DEAD.





mocking him from the shore. He makes an offering of tobacco ; the spirit of Echo is appeased, and, as he passes the bank, he is troubled no more. It is this explanation of the unknown by the idea of life which gives rise to the Indian belief in numerous Manitous and unseen powers which so largely dominate an Indian's thought. His explanation of sickness, for example, is that some spell is being worked upon him, and the remedy is to discover some person whom he has offended and who must be appeased or destroyed. Closely associated with ideas of this kind is the notion that the possession of another person's property, *e.g.*, of a portion of his body, such as his hair, or even the knowledge of his name, gives the holder some power. As love charms, or for purpose of revenge, they will make images of other persons addressing them in soothing or angry terms, or sticking them through the heart. The Indians have often shown great reluctance to be drawn or photographed, fearing that they would thus pass into the power of another. The same idea underlies the reluctance to give their personal names ; they will readily tell their tribe or totem, but beyond this they hesitate to go. On the same grounds they abstain from mentioning the dead, lest by thus appearing to assume power over the departed, they may anger the spirits. Needless to say, they believe in their ability to consult the spirits, and invariably secure information and advice. One account describes how a circle was traced on the ground, a special tent erected, and the villagers assembled ; the medicine-man enters the tent with a rattle in his hands, while his attendant squats outside and beats monotonously on a drum. The conjuror calls loudly upon his Manitou for aid ; the drumming and the singing become louder and louder ; the tent commences to sway to and fro, and then there is silence. Presently a small voice is heard in the sky conversing with the medicine-man in an unknown tongue. At last, bathed in perspiration, the conjuror staggers into the open and makes known to the excited crowd the intelligence received from the spirits. All Indian villagers have not yet learned the powers of ventriloquism.

We have just referred to the totem, which plays so large a part in Indian life. Schoolcraft, writing of the Chippewas, says " The totem is in fact a device, corresponding to the heraldic bearings of civilised nations, which each person is authorised to bear, as the evidence of his family identity. The very etymology of the word, which is a derivative from *Do daim*, a town or village, or original family residence,

denotes this." The significance of the totem, which can never be changed, continues throughout life and after death. Not only are totem poles erected in the villages, but the totems of the deceased are prominent in the burial grounds. Two pleasing customs in connection with burial may be mentioned. It is told of the Eskimos that they "lay a dog's head by the grave of a child, for the soul of a dog can find its way everywhere, and will show to the ignorant babe the way to the land of souls." The Iroquois in ancient times would capture a bird and set it free over the grave on the evening of the burial, to bear away the spirit to its heavenly rest.

The notions of a future state are vague, but it is commonly thought that during the journey there will be the same needs as on the earth; food, tobacco, and the bow and arrow of the deceased are placed beside the grave, upon which a fire is lighted to enable the spirit to prepare his food.

Such are some of the ideas which have prevailed at different times among various tribes. For the most part reasoning powers are feeble, yet on occasion somewhat surprising inferences are drawn. The Eskimos, for example, have a tradition of a deluge which they attribute to an unusually high tide. Being asked the reason of the belief, the reply is "Did you never see little stones, like clams and such things as live in the sea, away up on the mountains?" The argument is that of the modern geologist.

It is with people having such a mentality, as is here suggested, that the servants of the Company have had to deal ever since they first came in contact with the native tribes. Consciously, or unconsciously, the method to adopt must, to a great extent, be decided by reference to the traditions and ingrained ideas of the Indians. That so conspicuous a measure of success should have been achieved is not a little remarkable.

The habits and mode of life of the Indians are largely determined by these traditions and beliefs, which are not quickly or readily changed, and the customs can scarcely be adequately understood, unless the underlying ideas are to some extent appreciated.

It is gradually borne in upon the Indians that the white men are the superior race, though this is by no means readily admitted in words, and some of the tribes consider themselves superior. This is, or was, a feature of the Chippewas, who have a common expression when anything awkward or foolish is done which signifies "as stupid as a





AN INDIAN CANOE.



STOUX CHIEF.



ESKIMOS.



white man." Another tribe regards itself as pre-eminently "the people," calling all others by their tribal names.

For the most part the Indians adjust themselves with singular efficiency to the conditions in which they have to live with few resources at their disposal. The clothing of the Eskimos, their snow-houses, and their lamps afford complete protection against the rigours of their climate. The birch-bark canoes are a triumph of ingenuity and convenience, and the tribes accustomed to the rivers become singularly expert in their management. Captain Hall, who spent some time among the Eskimos, says that he saw one of the Eskimo turning somersaults in the water seated in his kyack, or canoe; over and over the man and his kyack went again and again, but he only wetted his hands and face.

Their tents, or wigwams, are quickly and easily erected, and are by no means uncomfortable, especially when there is a blazing fire, which all Indians know how to produce. So convenient are these tents, that if a moose is killed, the wigwam is moved to the animal, instead of the food being brought to the dwelling; this movability is a healthy feature upon which a qualified civilisation is not an improvement. Many Indians have learnt to build log huts, which are sealed up so as to admit of little ventilation; they tend to cause consumption and soon become insanitary, evils which do not attach to the native wigwam.

Especially in times gone by, as, for example, towards the end of the eighteenth century, large populations have been destroyed by smallpox, to which it would seem that the Indians are particularly subject. Some improvement in this respect was brought about by the system of inoculation, which, early in the eighteenth century, Lady Mary Montagu brought from Turkey.

Against minor ailments, they place much reliance on medicines they obtain from the trading posts. \* On one occasion a Chief showed a visitor his collection of specifics against evil spirits and the dangers of battles; they consisted of such things as lumps of white sugar, grains of coffee, pepper, cloves, and nutmeg; perhaps the trader who supplied them believed in faith-healing.

As hunters and trappers the Indians are, of course, singularly expert. Ballantyne gives us in *Hudson Bay* a vivid description of an Indian visiting his traps at night; he leaves the wigwam with its comfortable fire and sets out across the snow; he takes with him a



small axe, a hunting-knife and a gun, together with a light hand-sledge for dragging home the animals, or game, which he may catch. He moves forward surely and rapidly, in spite of the darkness, until he comes to one of his traps, where he listens attentively and hears the rattling of the chain. A cloud passes from over the moon and reveals a beautiful black fox caught in the steel trap ; it is tied to the sledge, the trap is re-set, and the Indian moves on. Towards midnight he proceeds more cautiously, for he is nearing two traps which were set in the morning for the formidable coast wolves ; they are suspicious and sagacious animals not easily caught, but, on this occasion, a large wolf is in the trap ; even so it is dangerous and difficult work to kill it. At last the Indian gets in the fatal blow, heaves the huge brute across his shoulder and carries it to his sledge. He is tired with his exertions, so clears a space in the snow, lights a fire, fills his pipe with tobacco, makes a meal of deer's meat, and goes to sleep. In the morning, perhaps, he may with some difficulty cut through a beaver lodge and drag out a few large, fat, sleepy beaver, which he flings sprawling on the snow. Loading his sledge with the fruits of his trip he makes his way back to his squaw.

Often, on account of difficulties of transport, the Indians were able to take to the trading posts only a small part of the furs they had obtained, but, with more numerous posts and—to the Indians—the eventful visits of traders in the winter, this state of things is largely altered.

In a petition addressed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1809 the Company summarised its dealings with the Indians. It explained that the Company had six hundred European servants dispersed over the North American Continent ; that the Indians had long been taught the use of firearms and could not resort with certainty to the bow or the javelin for their daily subsistence. Accustomed to the hatchet they could ill adopt the primitive stone axe ; nor could they recur to the simple arts by which they supported themselves before the introduction of British manufactures. At this time the Company's factories were being attacked by the French, and aid was sought from the British Government.

The Indians have become almost entirely dependent upon the Company for a large part of their needs. There was inevitably, as we have seen, a mingling of good consequences with bad, but on the whole there was much more benefit than disadvantage. Doubtless

the Indians were encouraged to pursue their old mode of life and continue the fur trade rather than become settlers ; in many districts the conditions are now changing, but the settler's life is not necessarily better or healthier than the hunter's.

As we look back over the two centuries and a half, we cannot but marvel at the successful management of the Indian tribes by the Hudson's Bay Company. There has never been an Indian war in Rupert's Land, and trade has been carried on in remote places with confidence and for the most part safety. The Indians long ago learnt to respect the " Kingchauch man " ; he was the representative of superior ability and the embodiment of civilisation and just dealing. On the one hand the traders have become fond of the Red man ; on the other, the Indians have been unswerving in their attachment to the Company's servants, and many of them are proud to claim the title of " a Hudson's Bay Company Indian."

As the Pleiades " Glitter like a swarm of fireflies tangled in a silver braid," the Iroquois use them as their guide by night. To the astronomer they suggest many different thoughts. He knows, among other things, that the dimensions of the cluster are such that it would take light three years to travel across it. From the sun to the remotest planet the light journey is but four hours.

This comparison of the astronomer with the Iroquois may suggest the contrast between the statesmen and men of affairs, who have ruled the Hudson's Bay Company from the centre of civilisation, and the primitive life of the rivers and forests of Canada. This is a striking reflection. If we think it out, we shall be on the way to an explanation of the progress that has been achieved in the past, and we shall see the promise of greater progress yet to come in the land of the Redskin and the beaver.



# A Chapter of Natural History



THE Beaver as an emblem of Canada, no less than by its appearance in the Arms of the Hudson's Bay Company, is the epitome of a fascinating story which, through a long sequence of events, traces the development of a great Dominion from Nature's provision of fur for the protection of animal life. In one way or another fur is an advantage to the animals, and we may assume that through long ages those species have survived which have acquired the fur best suited to environment. Taking a common experience, that animals of the same species have thicker and better fur the further north they live, we may wonder whether this is due to the most warmly clad individuals having been favoured and preserved during many generations, or whether the climate has some effect upon the fur, as appears to be the case with many domestic animals. It may be that both these causes have been at work.

Other conditions, helping to determine the extent to which a species may flourish, are the prevalence of food and the absence of enemies. A resulting tendency is to produce an abundance of life in comparatively inaccessible regions, and a decrease of wild animals as a country is gradually claimed and occupied by man. This tendency is accentuated when, as continually happens, the animals are of advantage or value to mankind.

The fur-bearing animals of Canada, in ages longer back than we can trace, supplied food and clothing to the Indians, served as a medium of barter among themselves, and finally brought the white man to exchange the furs which the Indians obtained for the various products of the Old World. A leading motive for the exploration and discovery of the new lands was the profit to be derived from the fur trade, and, little by little, as the tide of the Whites advanced, the Redskins retreated, as also, by partial or complete extermination, did many of the fur-bearing animals, both being continually followed by the spread of civilisation and the settlement of the new land.



In this connection the Beaver has, by common consent, played the leading part. The Canadian Beaver is the largest of the rodents, and is considerably bigger than its European cousins, which are now extinct in many places where they formerly abounded. The habits of the Beaver are well known, since the ingenuity with which it constructs its dams and lodges has always been a matter of great interest. Its general length may be taken to be about 30 in., with a tail 9 in. long; 30 lbs. may be considered a fair weight, with about double this as a maximum. It has ranged all over temperate America, wherever wood and water were to be found. They must originally have existed in millions, since it is estimated that fifty to sixty years ago half-a-million were destroyed annually by man, and a possible equal number by other agencies.

The Beaver is a strict monogamist, and when he and his wife have selected the stream they propose to make into a pond, they proceed to construct the dam by laying quantities of brushwood in the



deepest part of the stream bed. Their teeth are exceptionally powerful, and it is said that two beavers can cut down a 3 in. sapling in three minutes, and a 6 in. tree in an hour or two. They sometimes raise a platform of mud round a tree to enable them to reach a thinner place and cut down the tree with greater ease. One observer saw three beavers cutting a large cottonwood tree ; after a time, one of them took his station in the water, looking steadfastly at the top of the tree ; when he saw it begin to move towards its fall, he gave the well-known danger signal to his companions by slapping his tail upon the surface of the water. The beavers retire when a tree is about to fall, perhaps to escape danger from the tree, but also to be in hiding lest the crash should attract enemies to the spot.

From the fallen tree the ingenious animals cut off the limbs to the proper length for removal to the water and the lodges. The entrances to the lodges are under water, but inside are galleries above water level ; in course of time the exterior of the lodges become so hard and strong as to afford effective protection against enemies. They are sociable creatures, and for the most part extraordinarily industrious. They build their dam and construct their lodges at night, doubtless because on land the Beaver is a poor traveller, and very vulnerable to attack. Among its enemies are the wolverine, bear, wolf, lynx, and otter. It is also a slow swimmer, but its diving power is remarkable. Trappers assert that it can travel a quarter of a mile under water without coming up to breathe, which implies that it can go five minutes without breathing. For swimming it relies principally on its hind feet, which are webbed, and uses the tail as a rudder. The mating season is February, when the pair make a contract for life. The young are born in May, when the mother separates herself from her mate and prepares a nest for the brood.

Outcast Beavers are by no means unknown, and the trappers and Indians have many strange theories to account for them ; as, for example, that they are beaten by the industrious ones, injured in one way or another, and driven away ; an alternative explanation is that the outcasts have lost their mates, and afterwards refuse to pair, leading solitary lives in burrows and having no interest in the construction of a lodge.

The favourite diet of the Beaver in Canada is the bark of the poplar or quaking aspen, the young bark and twigs of most of the hard woods, and, in summer, many kinds of vegetation, such as pond-lily roots and



even berries. Like most of the rodents which do not hibernate, the Beavers store up food for the winter. As a food supply the Beaver takes a prominent place ; the flesh is good and the tail is considered a delicacy. In a vast portion of the Mackenzie River district it serves the natives as the buffalo did the Indians of the Plains ; it is their staff of life, it feeds and clothes them, and supplies the necessary peltry for barter with the traders. Its wonderful coat of fur is prime for half the year ; it is backed by a very strong skin, and is of a most durable nature, in addition to having a rich and good appearance. The general colour in its natural state is a light chestnut. The rich under fur is usually of a much deeper shade, but both black and white freaks are found.

The substitution of silk for beaver fur in the manufacture of hats, in 1839, led to a great fall in the value of the fur ; this has been fully atoned for by its present extensive use for collars, stoles, and muffs.

Many vast areas formerly inhabited by Beaver are now settled, and in them the useful animal is practically extinct ; but there remain extensive territories that appear unlikely to become suitable for general human habitation, where the Beaver may long flourish, provided extermination is not carried too far. The Beaver is subject to diseases that are as yet little understood, and has its years of increase and decrease ; but it breeds rapidly, being supposed to add 20 per cent. per annum to its population. From every point of view it would be deplorable in the extreme if the fate which has overtaken the buffalo were allowed to fall upon the Beaver, to which, in no indirect fashion, the discovery and development of Canada are so largely due.

## THE MUSQUASH

The Musquash, or Musk-Rat, is very much smaller than the beaver, being in fact less than half the length of the latter ; yet it is an enemy which the beaver fears. The habitats of the two animals are in many respects similar. The Musquash chooses marshy ponds and the banks of slow-running, sunny streams ; it seldom wanders more than one hundred yards from its home. Less sociable than the beaver, Musk-Rats join efforts in the production of the rat-house, or lodge, and make use of the loud alarm splash on the water as a danger signal. They



sometimes combine to fight a common enemy, and, particularly on land, are fierce fighters, by no means always waiting to be attacked.

The mating season is in April, when it would appear that desperate fights take place among the males. The Musquash is probably monogamous, since the male certainly concerns itself with the young, and divides with the female the labour of building and keeping up the house.

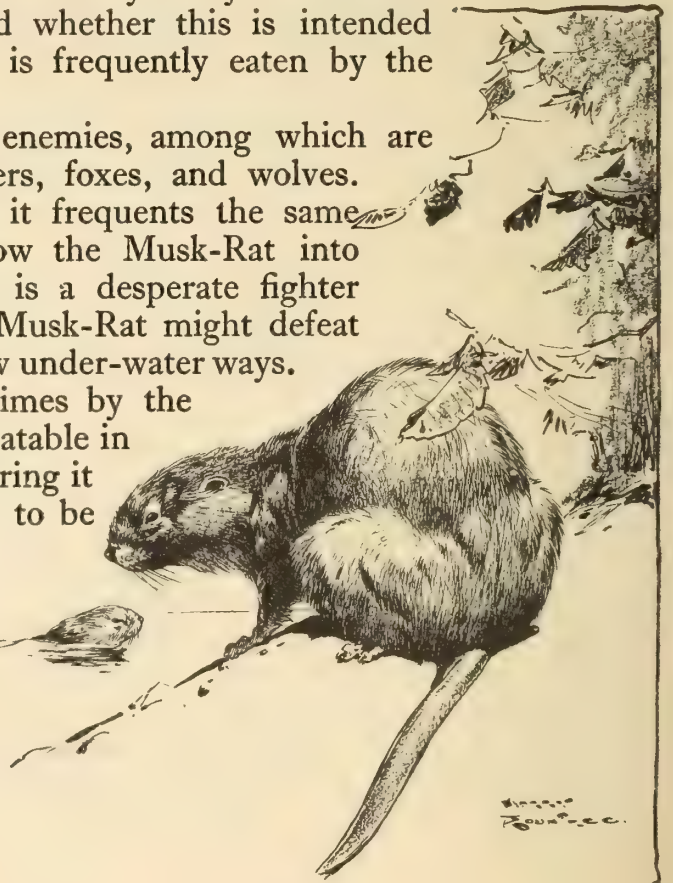
When a new home is to be made, vegetation and mud are brought to the spot, and a little island of rubbish is gradually piled up. As soon as this is a few inches above water, the builder digs a tunnel through the rushes, under the water level, and a house is available, with the roof sufficiently open for the Musk-Rat to see out. The work goes on incessantly; the chamber is enlarged, additional entrances are made, and the channel to each is deepened.

The food of the species is chiefly vegetable matter, but it will eat clams, fish, insects, and even young birds when it can catch them in the water. Although not generally supposed to store up food for the winter, Musquash do so sometimes, or at least in effect; all through the summer they carry bundles of green-stuff into their dens, and whether this is intended for bedding, or for building, it is frequently eaten by the end of the winter.

The Musk-Rat has many enemies, among which are hawks and owls; weasels, otters, foxes, and wolves. The worst of all is the mink; it frequents the same places, is aquatic, and can follow the Musk-Rat into its house; the latter, however, is a desperate fighter when at bay, and a strong old Musk-Rat might defeat a small mink in one of the narrow under-water ways.

The flesh is eaten at all times by the Indians, and although not unpalatable in the fall and the winter, in the spring it is so impregnated with musk as to be quite unfit for food.

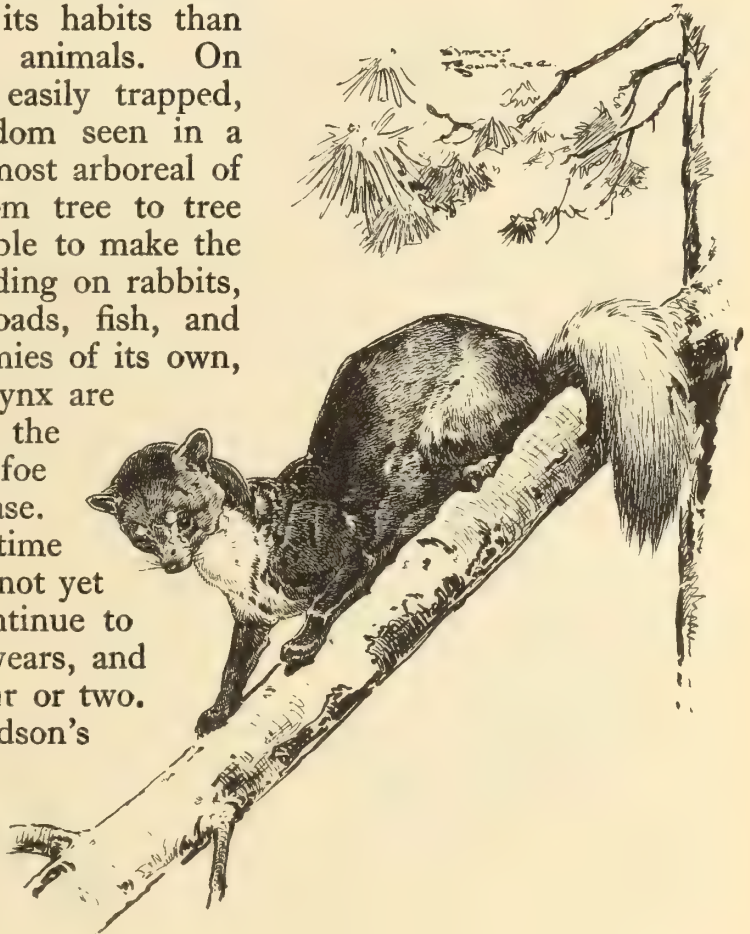
The fur is of good quality, and on a strong skin; in colour it is chestnut brown, darkest on the crown and back, and becoming paler and greyer on the belly and



cheeks. While not of great value, it is one of the most important furs in Manitoba, and exists in great abundance. During times of plenty a skilful trapper can catch fifty to one hundred in a day. It is a useful fur for all kinds of trimmings, but, being warm, durable and not too heavy, it is principally employed for coats and cloaks. It is used either in its natural state, or dyed in imitation of the Fur Seal.

### THE MARTEN, OR CANADIAN SABLE

The attraction of the Marten is its silky fur, which is often of a rich dark brown colour, shading into blackish on the tail, with a large irregular patch of pale buff, or orange, on the throat. The colour ranges from a rich dark hue to golden yellow. It has the reputation of being one of the most unsociable of an unsociable family; it frequents dark woods, and is one of the first animals to flee from advancing civilisation. Much less appears to be known about its habits than about those of most other animals. On account of its greed it is easily trapped, but it is comparatively seldom seen in a state of freedom. It is the most arboreal of all the weasels, and leaps from tree to tree with tireless energy. It is able to make the squirrel its prey, besides feeding on rabbits, mice, shrews, birds, frogs, toads, fish, and insects. Naturally it has enemies of its own, of which the fisher and the lynx are chief. It may, however, be at the mercy of some more insidious foe such as a parasite, or a disease. Its numbers vary greatly from time to time, for reasons which are not yet fully understood. They continue to increase for seven or eight years, and then decline quickly for a year or two. One of the experienced Hudson's Bay Company's traders attributes this to migration; others put it down to





lessened fertility of the female on account of either starvation or over-feeding ; while yet others assign some epidemic disease as the cause.

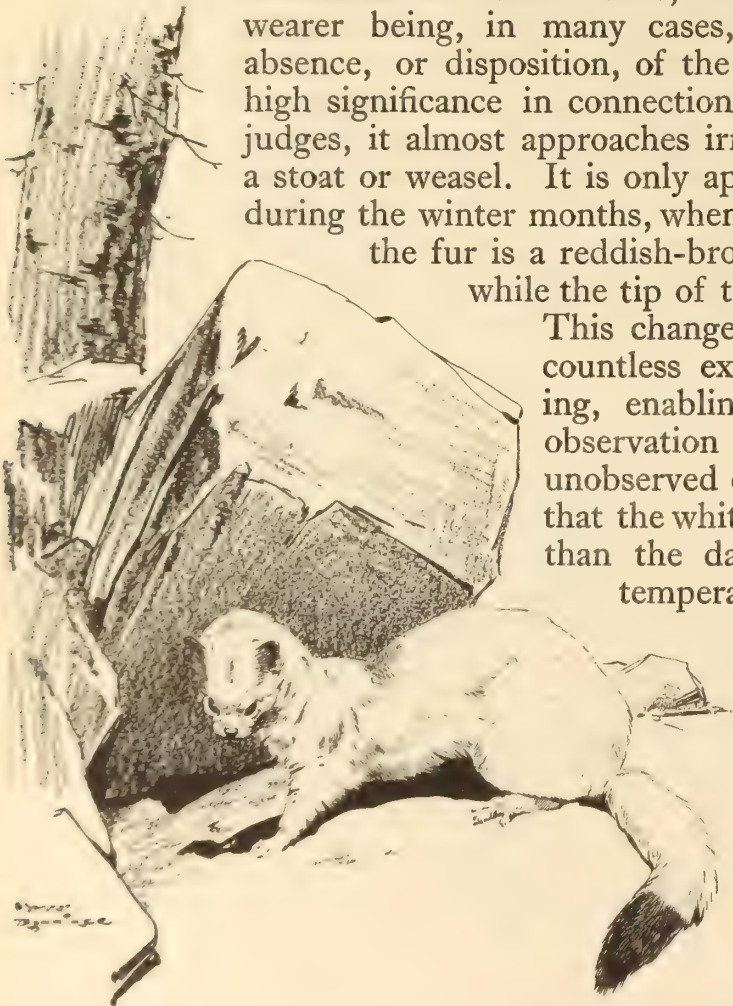
There is much evidence to show that Martens, taken young, are easily tamed, and soon acquire an attachment for the person who feeds them, but they never become quite docile. The supply of Marten is still extensive, but has fallen far behind the demand ; realising that so fine a fur will always find a market, several attempts at Marten farming have been made, but so far without success. It may perhaps be doubted whether, if they could be bred in captivity, the fur would be of such good quality as that of the wild animal.

### ERMINE

At least six hundred years ago, the wearing of ermine in England was restricted to members of the Royal Family ; it is now part of almost all State robes, the rank and position of the wearer being, in many cases, indicated by the presence, absence, or disposition, of the black spots. Recalling this high significance in connection with monarchs, nobles, and judges, it almost approaches irreverence to call the animal a stoat or weasel. It is only appropriately called an Ermine during the winter months, when its coat is white ; in summer the fur is a reddish-brown above the white beneath, while the tip of the tail at all seasons is black.

This change in the winter is one of the countless examples of protective colouring, enabling the animal to elude the observation of its enemies and to steal unobserved on its prey. It may be, also, that the white covering retains heat better than the dark, and thus maintains the temperature of the body. It seems that the change of colour is not due to a moult, but is caused by phagocytes, or corpuscles, which devour the colouring matter of the hair.

The Ermine dwells in thickets and stony places,



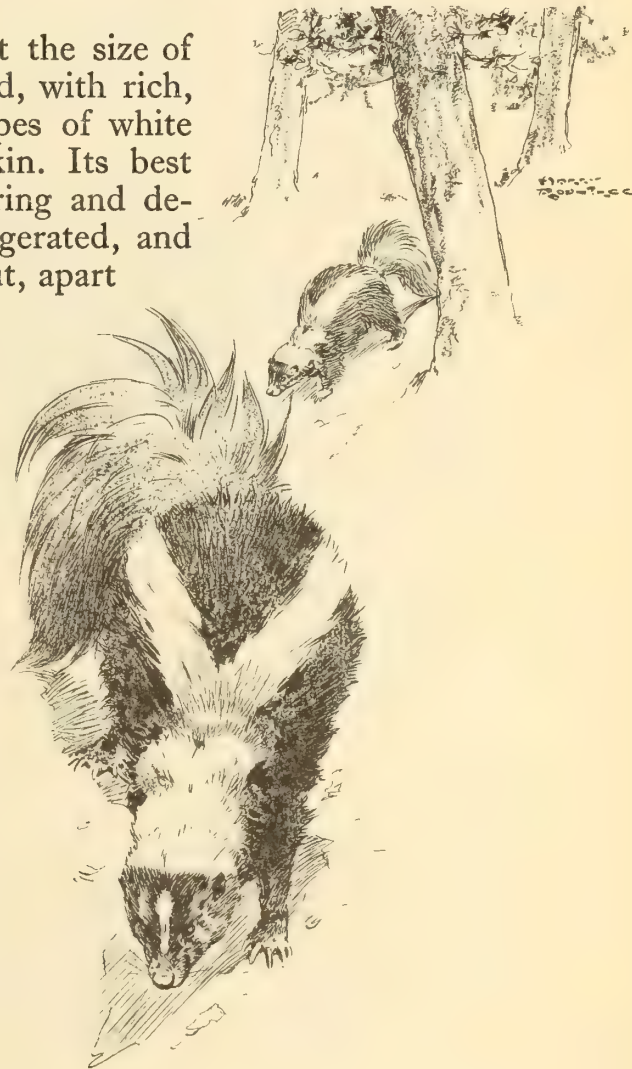


and sometimes makes use of the deserted burrows of moles. It is an agile and exceedingly sanguinary animal, which feeds principally on rats and rabbits. It is because it pursues its prey with such pertinacity and boldness that it is called by the name "Stoat," signifying bold. The animal measures about 10 in., exclusive of the tail, which is some 4 in. long. It takes readily to water and will even climb trees in pursuit of prey. The weasel in general preys on every kind of living thing that it can conquer, and appears to revel in killing for killing's sake. Of all the weasel family the Ermine is about the most ferocious.

### SKUNK

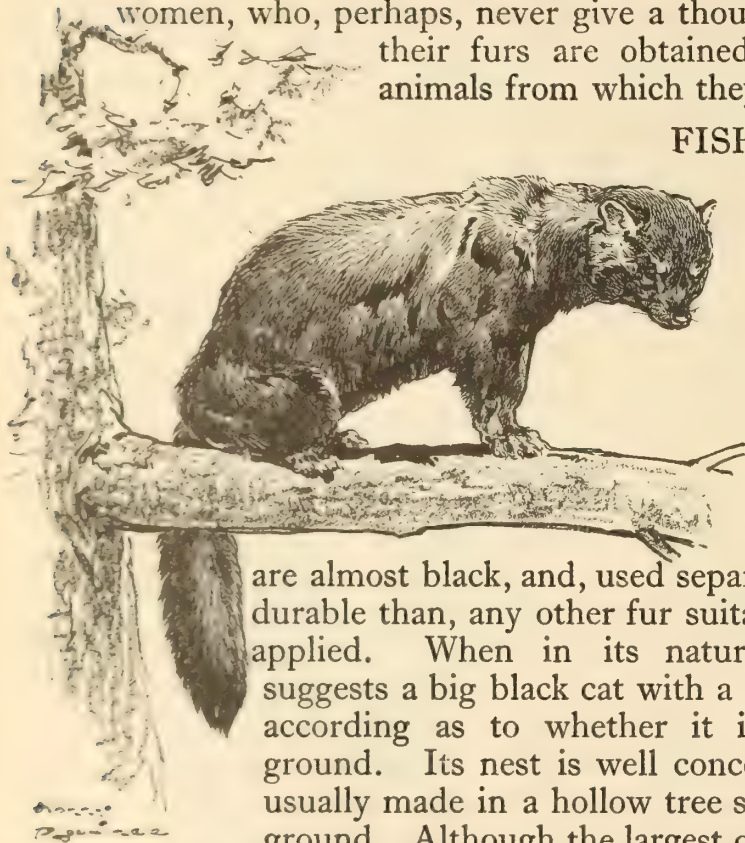
The Skunk is a beautiful animal, about the size of a cat though of a stouter and heavier build, with rich, lustrous, black fur, generally with two stripes of white hair extending the whole length of the skin. Its best known peculiarity is of such an overpowering and devastating character that it cannot be exaggerated, and it is not easy adequately to describe it ; but, apart from this, the Skunk is rather attractive.

It affords an excellent example of warning colouration ; its defence is so efficient that it is practically immune from attack. Its black and white fur and bushy tail gives warning of its presence, and its consciousness that it needs only to be seen to be avoided, gives it a characteristic slowness of motion and fearlessness of aspect. It makes no use of its offensive secretion unless attacked, and then only after fair warning ; it is not employed by the Skunks when fighting each other. It is an animal of much value to the farmer ; pre-eminently an insect-eater, it destroys more beetles, grasshoppers and the like than all other mammals put together and, in addition, devours vast numbers of mice.



It appears that Skunk have for so long been safe from attack that they have neglected methods of defence which their ancestors employed ; they have lost their speed, their ability to climb, and their keen wits ; they have become slow and stupid and unsuspicious, with the result that they are trapped with the utmost ease. One of its few effective foes is the horned owl, which can swoop down from above in silence and seize the Skunk unawares by the neck. Skunk have not infrequently been kept as pets, and that without any inconvenience ; while Skunk farming has often been conducted with success. The handling of a Skunk, even after it has been trapped, is not invariably free from unpleasant consequences, and suggests the many difficulties which the trappers meet with in providing furs for the men and women, who, perhaps, never give a thought to the processes by which their furs are obtained, or the life histories of the animals from which they are derived.

### FISHER



The Fisher does not fish, but probably acquired the name on account of its fondness for the fish baits used in trapping. It is one of the largest of the martens, and in general its colour is greyish-brown or brownish-black, becoming of a lighter shade towards the head. The tails

are almost black, and, used separately, are as rich as, and more durable than, any other fur suitable for the uses to which it is applied. When in its natural surroundings, the Fisher suggests a big black cat with a bushy tail, or else a black fox, according as to whether it is seen in the trees, or on the ground. Its nest is well concealed, and rarely found ; it is usually made in a hollow tree some 30 ft. or 40 ft. above the ground. Although the largest of the marten tribe, being from two to three feet long, it is very lithe, and can readily enter a hole only 4 in. or 5 in. in diameter. It is probably the most active of all arboreal animals. The marten can catch the squirrel, but the Fisher can catch the marten. It is equally at home on the ground, and can run down



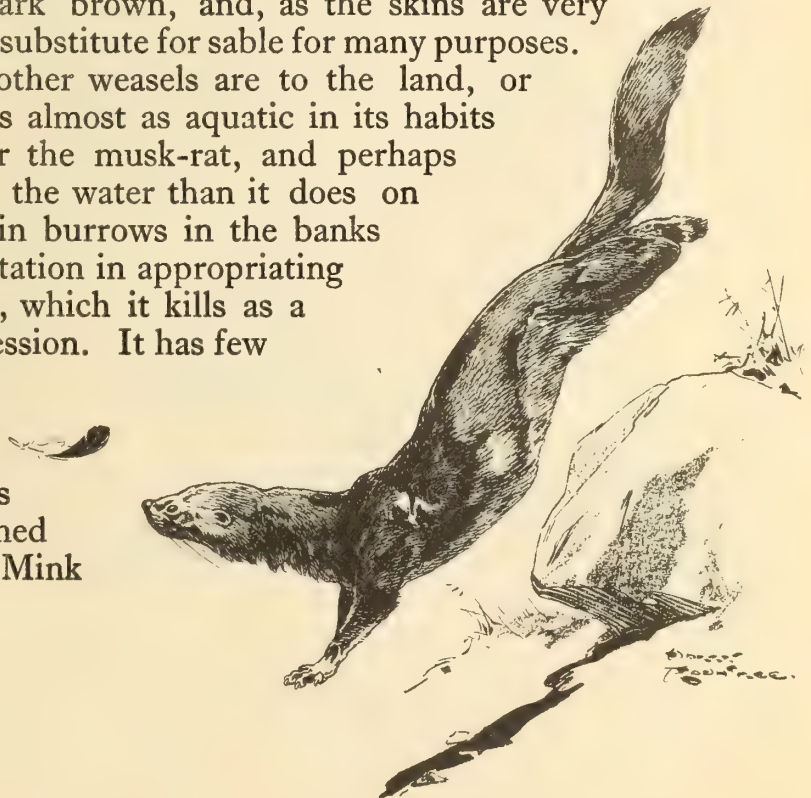
hares in open chase. If only it could swim and dive well, it would be perhaps the most wonderfully equipped animal in the world.

Like the wolverine, it is a considerable source of annoyance to the trappers, following up a line of traps, and stealing the bait, or eating the sable, or other animals, that might have been caught.

The most surprising stories are told of the animals which the Fisher can tackle with success ; it runs the fox like a hound, following all day till the fox gets tired and takes refuge in a hole, where it is easily despatched. The raccoon is half as heavy again as the fox, and twice as much a fighter, yet the Fisher can catch and kill it, and it is said that the abundance of raccoons depends upon the scarcity of Fishers. Other accounts tell of deer of large size being killed by them, and they even feed extensively on porcupines, which, like the skunk, are to a great extent immune from attack.

### MINK

The Mink is yet another member of the weasel family from which, in the aggregate, a large amount of fur is obtained. In size it much resembles the English polecat, having a length of from 15 in. to 18 in., and, in addition, a tail about 7 in. long. The female is considerably smaller than the male ; in colour different specimens present a considerable range of variation. The most usual colour is a rich dark brown, and, as the skins are very durable, it is an economical substitute for sable for many purposes. It is to the water what other weasels are to the land, or martens to the trees. It is almost as aquatic in its habits as the otter, the beaver, or the musk-rat, and perhaps spends more of its time in the water than it does on land. It makes its nest in burrows in the banks of streams, and has no hesitation in appropriating the home of the musk-rat, which it kills as a preliminary to taking possession. It has few serious enemies, for it is a fierce and dangerous fighter ; but, as in the case of the skunk, it has much to fear from the horned owl. A story is told of a Mink





which had seized a trout, being swooped down upon by a large owl, which grabbed the Mink, and made off with it into the air. The Mink is an expert fisher, and has been seen to catch a trout a foot long. Like all the weasels, it has scent glands, and is perhaps second to the skunk—if, indeed, it is second—in regard to the offensiveness of the odour, but it lacks the ability of the skunk to squirt its liquid musk to a distance, and hence it is not feared, and protected, to anything like the same extent.

Mink are easily raised in captivity, and, when prices rule high, Mink breeding is profitable; but, as with other furs, fashion has much effect upon value, and at low prices Mink-farming is not remunerative.

### WOLVERINE, OR GLUTTON.

In the Rocky Mountains, the Wolverine is commonly called the "Skunkbear," a name which is by no means inappropriate. It is about the size of a small bear, and its fur has something of the quality of a bear robe. Like the skunk, it has pale bands of chestnut, sometimes almost white, from the shoulder to the tail, while, to complete the resemblance, it has glands which secrete a yellowish fluid possessing a highly fœtid odour.

The trappers have no love for the Wolverine, which has developed with great success the highly obnoxious habit of following up a line of marten traps and securing the victims instead of leaving them for the trapper, who has only two alternatives; he must kill the Wolverine, or abandon his line.

They are not satisfied to take the contents of the traps; they not infrequently move the traps bodily for long distances, sometimes burying them in the snow, in accordance with a curious habit, which leads them to hide all sorts of things for which they can have no use. A hunter having left his lodge unguarded, found it completely gutted on his return;



blankets, guns, kettles, axes, knives, everything had vanished ; but, by following up the tracks of the Glutton, nearly all the property was recovered.

The Wolverine is an expert at discovering what others have hidden, and, unless exceptional precautions are taken, nothing that has been cached is secure, except for the first day, when the Wolverine is too cautious to attack the store. One man made a safe cellar by cutting a hole in the ice, covering it with snow, and pouring over it water which quickly froze. An Indian wrapped some furs in a birchbark and tied the bundle to a high branch of a tree ; this would be no effective deterrent to the keen scent of the Wolverine, but the attachment of two sleigh bells, which would ring as the " Carcajou " crawled down the branch, could be relied upon to scare the cautious beast. A similar plan, with a necklet of cod hooks in place of bells, also proved effective.

The Glutton is a dangerous beast to approach, and a Wolverine, when she is with young, is a tigress of ferocity and absolutely fearless. The animal is not prolific ; they are not easily caught, and, as it is difficult to match a number of skins in both quality and colour, it is an expensive fur, while its excellent qualities make it valuable. The darkest of the least coarse skins are worth the most, and, unlike the majority of Arctic animals, its fur becomes darker in the winter.

## FOXES

Over a large part of the world, and from time immemorial, Foxes have had much to do with men, and it may reasonably be supposed that the characteristic cunning of the Fox is largely due to this association. In order to survive against his human enemy, the Fox had to develop his wits to the utmost, and has succeeded remarkably well in doing so. Even wild Foxes have from birth a deep-laid fear of every strange object, and early acquire a horror of anything that bears the taint of man. The quickness with which they learn to distinguish and distrust the latest devices of the trappers is striking evidence of their cunning, and perhaps also of the power to communicate ideas.

The Fox is a good hunter, and misses nothing as he trots from cover to cover in a somewhat zigzag line ; he stops at



the slightest click of leaf or twig, and freezes to a statue in an instant, holding one foot up in a pose of wonderful grace. He frequently feeds on poultry, rabbits, and game birds, but probably mice form the largest part of his diet. In its turn the Fox has many enemies ; it is preyed on by wolves, lynxes, and fishers, while the young are destroyed by every evil beast that can find them, as well as by most of the larger birds of prey. It is not, however, without effective means of defence ; its speed for a mile or so may be as much as thirty miles an hour, and the prairie Red Fox has effective protective colouring. When satisfied or tired, he lays down for a nap usually in some exposed place. He curls himself up in a ball, when he looks like a yellow boulder, and appears to be conscious of the security afforded by this camouflage. The brush of the Fox is of much practical use to him, and becomes large in proportion to the cold of the climate. In fighting, especially with other Foxes, it uses the tail as a foil and dashes it into the eyes of an enemy with a view to securing an advantage. The tail also makes a most effective travelling-rug ; the nose and pads of the Fox are its only exposed parts, and might easily be frost-bitten when the animal is asleep in severe weather ; it draws these together when it lies down and curls round them the brush, which acts as both wrap and respirator. On occasion, however, the tail is a disadvantage. A hunted Fox was observed to stop frequently and seemed to worry its tail ; when it was shot, it turned out that the tail was heavy with water, and the Fox had been trying to wring, or stamp out, the water with its front paws and so get rid of the impediment to speed. The fur of the Red Fox varies from pale-yellowish to a dark red, and is often very brilliant.

Silver Foxes are born in Red Fox families, but their fur is one of the most effective and precious of all, and fetches extremely high prices ; the fur upon the neck usually runs dark, almost black, and



in some cases is black half way down the length of the skin ; in rarer cases, three-quarters of the length. In very exceptional instances the black continues the whole length ; when this is the case, they are known as " natural Black Foxes."

The Cross Fox is about the same size as the Silver, and generally has a pale yellowish or orange tone, with some silvery points and a darkish cross-marking on the shoulders. The darkest and best come from Labrador and Hudson Bay, and, as with Silver and other kinds, the quality is inferior when taken from warmer latitudes.

Blue Fox is of a slatey or drab colour ; they are scarce, and consequently dear. It is, however, the Silver Fox that is the most attractive ; the lustre, fullness, and beauty are unique and inimitable, and, since these furs are rare, there is an additional reason for them being fashionable.

The White Fox is found in the extreme northern sections of Hudson Bay. In some specimens both the top hair and the under-wool are quite white, but these are rare and expensive. The skins are only perfectly white in the winter, and not always then : those which fail in this respect are generally dyed jet-black or to some blue-grey or drab shade.

## WOLVES

The Wolf is a sociable animal, as in times gone by many have found to their cost when pursued by a band, or pack, of hungry Wolves. At least in Canada, however, they seem to have learned a great deal by experience and to have reached the conclusion that human beings are better avoided than attacked. This discovery has been made within recent years, and it is easier to substantiate the statement than to explain how the knowledge was arrived at. When the buffalo swarmed over Western America, they were followed by troops of Wolves, which preyed on the weak ; when the buffalo disappeared, the Wolves turned their attention to the cattle on the ranches. In those days, some forty or more years ago, the Wolves were easily trapped or poisoned, and it seemed not unlikely that the ranchmen would succeed in exterminating the species. Presently the Wolves learned how to detect and defy traps and poison, and the knowledge passed from one to another. Few Wolves ever get into a trap, and still fewer get out again ; so it would seem that the information



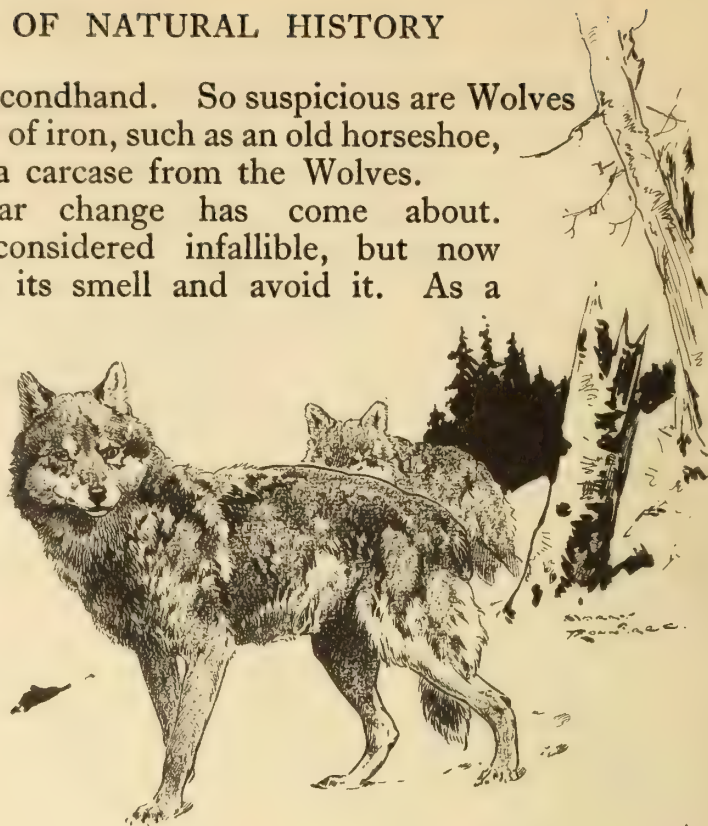
must have been obtained at secondhand. So suspicious are Wolves of traps, that almost any piece of iron, such as an old horseshoe, normally suffices to protect a carcass from the Wolves.

With poison, a similar change has come about. Strychnine was formerly considered infallible, but now the Wolves recognise it by its smell and avoid it. As a result they are on the increase and have returned to many of their old hunting grounds in the cattle countries.

The Grey Wolf is one of the shyest of wild animals, and, though often heard at night, it is seldom seen until it has been caught or killed.

The education of the cubs is most effective, whether conscious or not; the mother Wolf teaches by example, as by showing her own terror at a trap, and the young learn their lesson with facility. It would appear to be instruction, rather than the development of instinct, that accounts for their effective adjustment to the new environment of man.

The best furs are of a bluish-grey colour, with flowing black top hair, and are obtained from the Hudson Bay district; they are excellent for carriage rugs. Although of value for their fur, Wolves do a great deal of mischief, and it has been suggested that their numbers could easily be diminished in any district by the comparatively easy process of tracking the parents home in March, when the young are born, and exterminating the family.



## THE OTTER

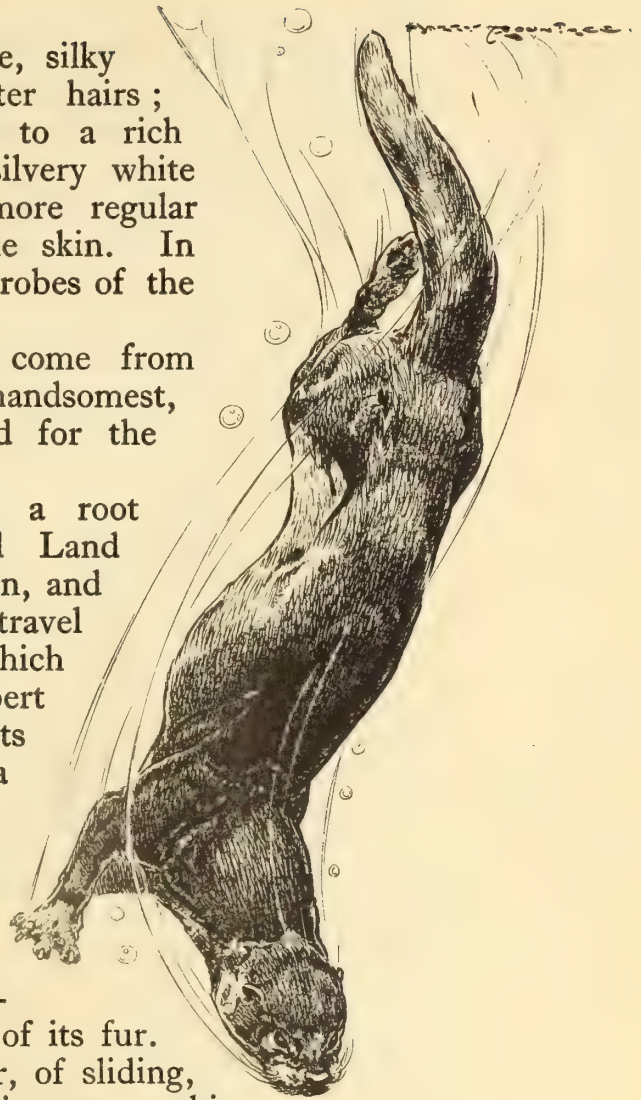
Both Land and Sea Otters are sought for their fur; the latter, especially, is of great value; it is the most durable of all the furs definitely classed as "precious." The coat of the Sea Otter is of great beauty, and, unlike other aquatic animals, the skin needs no process of

unhairing. The fur is of a rich, dense, silky wool, with the softest and shortest of water hairs ; the colours vary from pale grey-brown to a rich black, and many have a sprinkling of silvery white hairs. The blacker the wool and the more regular the silver points, the more valuable the skin. In China the fur is used to trim the State robes of the Mandarins.

The best Land, or River, Otters, come from Canada. This fur is one of the best, handsomest, and most durable, and is generally used for the lining, collars and cuffs of men's coats.

The name "Otter" comes from a root meaning water, and even the so-called Land Otter is aquatic in its habits, and lives in, and near open water. In the winter it will travel long distances to find rapids and falls which have not been frozen over. It is an expert fisher, and both trout and salmon are at its mercy. It makes its den by digging a burrow in the bank at the edge of a stream or lake, with the entrance under water.

The Otter is one of the most intelligent of the weasel family, and might well survive after related species had disappeared, were it not for the attractions of its fur. It is very fond of play and, in particular, of sliding, or tobogganing, down slopes into water ; it pursues this pastime in both summer and winter ; when snow is not available, a hillside with clayey soil is selected, stones and other impediments are carefully removed for a breadth of several feet, and the repeated sliding with wet bodies soon produces a slippery surface. The animals may be seen sliding down and climbing up again for hours on end, evidently in a state of keen enjoyment. Trappers take advantage of this habit to capture the Otters at their slides. Otters indulge in much play in other ways as well, and the young make most engaging pets ; there seems no end to their fun, energy, and good nature, and their movements are exceptionally graceful.





## THE LYNX

We now come to a member of the cat family, which owes its name of Lynx to a Greek word meaning "to see," whence the common expression "lynx-eyed." Various fabulous properties were attributed to the animal by the ancients, including ability to see through opaque substances. When seen alive, the Lynx looks, and behaves, like a large grey cat. It has the good fortune to be endowed with effective snowshoes, through the possession of large feet covered with stiff hairs. Although it may weigh 30 lbs. or 40 lbs., it can walk lightly on soft snowdrifts, where other animals would flounder hopelessly, and the Lynx constantly takes advantage of this superiority. It is usually a shy creature, and avoids men, except that on occasion it will follow a hunter, unperceived, unless he is aware of the habit; if he seeks cover in a wood, the Lynx is likely to appear after a short time, and be added to the hunter's bag.

Although it displays superb activity among matted branches or underbrush, the Lynx is surprisingly slow on the level ground; any dog can quickly overtake it, and Indians on foot not infrequently chase and kill it. It is also a good swimmer, and appears to take to the water without being driven. To a somewhat greater extent even than most other animals, Lynxes fluctuate widely in numbers over a cycle of

about ten years; at the maximum there may be ten times as many as at the minimum. It is easily caught by any of the usual methods, and its fur is a staple of the North-Western trade. The best come from the Hudson Bay district and are generally dyed black or brown. The busbies of the British Hussars are made of Lynx, and the free, silky, easy movement of the fur, when there is the least disturbance of the atmosphere, produces a pleasing effect.



The Lynx, however, is by no means an unmixed boon to the fur-traders. There is an interesting sequence of events which well illustrates the interdependence that prevails in Nature ; the Lynx feeds on hares and rabbits, but it destroys smaller mammals that prey on the hares, with the result that an influx of Lynxes causes a notable decrease in many other fur-bearing animals.

## BEARS

The Bear family is distributed over the greater part of the earth, and several different species are found in Canada. We may take the Black Bear as a specimen of the rest ; it ranges over a large area, and probably migrates. Like most animals, it has a tendency to form beaten roads, and the heavier it is, the more obvious the trail becomes. The Bear seems singularly conservative in adhering to the trail formed by the pioneers, and this facilitates trapping. It is convenient for men to follow the paths made by the Bears, but, in doing so, they need to beware of the traps. The Black Bear is essentially a solitary animal, and when seen together they are for the most part a family group. The family life of the Bear is distinctly attractive. A full-grown Bear may be 5 ft. long and weigh over 200 lbs. ; but at birth they are about 8 in. long and weigh from 9 oz. to 12 oz. The gambols of little Bears are boy-like and amusing ; they wrestle, and box, and pretend to fight, but are usually careful to keep the rules of the game and avoid hurting each other.

The principal, though not the sole, food of the Bear is vegetable food, including honey, and in the autumn they accumulate large stores of food inside their own skin ; they feed night and day, but good digestion waits on appetite and the Bear grows daily rounder. Fur is a great protection





from the cold, and fat is as good ; the Bear has 4 in. of each when winter comes ; and yet of all the big forest beasts, although it is the best protected, it is the only one to shun the battle with winter ; it seeks a sheltered den and sinks into a sleep that lasts till the spring. The time at which he seeks his den is determined, not by the temperature but by the food supply, and, in a mild winter, the Bear may prowls about for nearly or quite the whole of it. The female behaves in the same way, until the maternal impulse prompts her to seek shelter for her prospective offspring, which are born in the latter half of January ; she remains sealed up in her winter den for several months, during which she neither eats nor drinks, and is yet in full possession of all her powers and faculties. When spring comes and the ice melts, the mother Bear sets forth in search of food, with the cubs stringing behind like a lot of little pigs ; she sleeps where and when she can, with the little ones cuddled in her arms and more or less beneath her body.

The intelligence of the Bear seems to vary greatly with the individual ; some hunters say that anyone, with any kind of a trap, can catch a Bear, while others maintain that the smartest fox that ever lived is a fool to an old Black Bear. It has marvellous powers of smell and hearing, and a deep-rooted shyness of strange things ; its motto is " In case of doubt, *run*," and it is nearly always in doubt. It is an expert climber, and is surprisingly quick ; it can get up a tree as well as any monkey.

The Grizzly Bear is a larger and more formidable beast ; the name " Grizzly " means grey, while the word " Grisly " stands for gruesome, grim, or terrible. An Indian with primitive weapons had little chance against a Grizzly ; but, like the wolf, it has learnt wisdom and has been educated by modern guns. The stupid Grizzlies are easily weeded out by the hunters, but the sifted remnant are the wisest of the wise. It is a common saying in the West that you never know what a Grizzly is going to do next, but you may be very sure he is going to be quick about it.

The Arctic Bear is by far the largest of all, and is more carnivorous, owing to the absence of vegetable food ; it feeds on seals and fish, and the carcasses of whales, though its life can be sustained on a purely vegetable diet. The soles of the feet are covered with close-set hairs, which enable it to walk securely on ice, on which Bears often float for great distances ; they are strong swimmers, and have been seen forty miles from shore, with no ice in sight to afford rest. The

skins are used for rugs, and those of the Black Bear for other purposes as well.

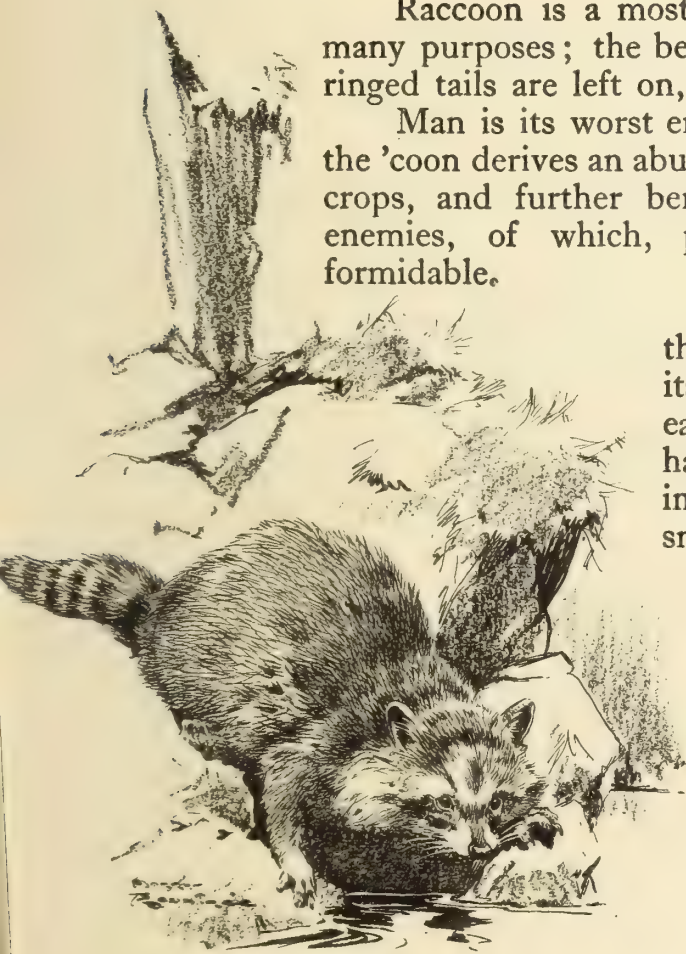
The Raccoon is a small member of the Bear family; it is a thickly built animal, about the size of a badger, with a coat of long, coarse, greyish-brown hair, and a short bushy tail, which is conspicuous for its black and white rings. The 'coons are omnivorous beasts, and feed upon mice, small birds, turtles' eggs, fish, nuts, and many other things. They are nocturnal in their habits, and hibernate like the Bear. The ideal den is a hollow branch high up in a large tree. It has the habit, when near the water, of washing its food before eating it, whence it is sometimes called the Wash Bear. It gropes in the mud for frogs, fish, or insects, and dabbles its prey in the water to clear off the sand or clay.

Raccoon is a most useful fur, which can be used for many purposes; the best has a bluish tone, and when the ringed tails are left on, the effect is pleasing.

Man is its worst enemy, although he is also its friend; the 'coon derives an abundant food supply from the settlers' crops, and further benefits from the destruction of its enemies, of which, perhaps, the fisher is the most formidable.

The variety of fur with which the Hudson's Bay Company concerns itself is considerably greater than in earlier times, while, on the other hand, fur that was formerly received in large quantities now comes in small. The recent supply of badger is about one-fortieth of what it was twenty years ago; in the same period, the supply of the valuable and beautiful Fur Seal, which was formerly abundant, has now almost disappeared. Fashion, of course, plays a large part in the demand for the various kinds of fur.

In the chapter on "Life in the Service" we have had





something to say as to how the furs are obtained, and of the methods by which they are transported. The various bales and packages in which they reach the Company's warehouse in London are interesting evidence of the places from which they came, and of the methods of conveyance employed.

After reaching London, the furs have to be graded. There is no mechanical means whereby this grading can be carried out: it is a matter of long experience and trained judgment. The same standards must be maintained, so far as possible, from year to year, and in London, which is the central fur market of the world, the Hudson's Bay grading is universally accepted and relied upon.

This state of affairs is largely the result of the work having been in the hands of one family for three generations, who have between them been in the service of the Company for exactly one hundred years. Mr. Rendall was first employed by the Company in 1820; his son, and now his grandson Mr. J. H. Rendall, were entrusted with the sorting and the grading of furs, and the efficiency with which the task has been, and is still being, accomplished, has largely contributed to place the Company in its pre-eminent position in the confidence of the fur trade of the world. This family centenary in 1920 happily coincides with the 250th anniversary of the granting of the Charter.

The animals, dead and alive, enter into the life of those engaged in the service of the Company, many of whom are keen naturalists and shrewd and experienced observers, to whose records the students of biological science readily acknowledge their indebtedness.

The interdependence, which we have seen to exist between one species of animal and another, exists also between the animals and man. It is easy to see how large a part fur-bearing animals have played in the opening up of the Dominion. It would be interesting, did space permit, to trace in greater detail the connection between the habits of particular animals and the effect they have had upon human activity and development.

# Landmarks of History



AFTER describing the granting of the Charter by King Charles, we sailed in imagination across the Atlantic and landed at Hudson Bay. We accompanied some of the explorers on their dangerous and difficult expeditions; we caught glimpses of life in the service; we lived a little among the Indians, trying to learn something of their thoughts, traditions, and customs, and we watched the fur-bearing animals in their native haunts. In this way, perhaps, we have caught something of the spirit that has animated the Company and its servants throughout its long history, and have seen part of the process by means of which the Canada of to-day originated and began to develop.

Through all this time the affairs of the Company were being directed from London. It was here that the policy was decided upon that enabled the Company of Adventurers to overcome countless difficulties, to build up the great influence it possesses to-day, and to make that continual adjustment to changing conditions which is the essential feature of vigorous and healthy life.

We left Prince Rupert and his associates in a rowing boat on the Thames after leaving the *Nonsuch* as it sailed for the Bay, and in possession of the Charter. We may return to them now, to trace in outline the direction of the Company from London and to glance at some of the principal landmarks of its history.

"The true and absolute Lords and Proprietors of the same Territory, Limits, and Places aforesaid" knew neither the extent, nor the significance of the grant. They had no idea that the waters draining into Hudson Bay rose in the Rocky Mountains, and that it was to be two hundred years before the Provinces of Manitoba and Saskatchewan, of Alberta, British Columbia and the North-West Territories were to come into being.

Year by year as the ships arrived from Hudson Bay in the Downs, or at Portsmouth, news was sent post-haste to London as to the result of the season's trade, and, pending the sale of the furs, it was sometimes necessary for members of the Company to advance money for the purchase of outfits. It might take several years before the complete returns were obtained from distant posts. At first the furs received



were sold privately, and the commercial centres for the fur trade were Leipsic and Amsterdam, Paris and Vienna; but in December, 1671, a new departure occurred. At Garraway's coffee-house in London "3,000 weight of Beaver Skins, comprised in thirty lotts" were offered for sale. The coffee-house was crowded with distinguished men, including Prince Rupert, the Duke of York, and the poet Dryden. It may have been this auction that led Dryden to write:

" Friend, once 'twas Fame that led thee forth  
To brave the Tropick Heat, the Frozen North,  
Late it was Gold, then Beauty was the Spur;  
But now our Gallants venture but for Fur."

Auctions in those days were conducted "by the candle" and not by the hammer, as at present. This sale, of which we give an illustration, was to lead to London becoming the principal world centre for the sale of furs.

More serious matters were soon to claim the attention of the Governor and Committee. Trouble with the French began and was to continue for many years. The Charter excluded territory possessed "by the Subjects of any other Christian Prince or State," and the rights of France were by no means clearly defined. French kings had given various charters, or licenses, from 1627 onwards, but they were vague in character, and the prevalent rule was "he shall take who has the power, and he shall keep who can." Not only were England and France frequently at war, but even when peace prevailed between the two countries, the conflicts between the two races in Canada were almost continuous on a small scale, if not on a large. We have already seen how on more than one occasion French ships of war attacked the Company's forts in Hudson Bay. Radisson was alternately in the service of the French and the English, and did not hesitate to serve the cause of his masters for the moment. From the earliest days there was keen rivalry north of the St. Lawrence. The area of the dispute spread quickly, and in 1686 the French undertook an overland expedition to James Bay and captured Moose Factory, of which possession was taken with much ceremony "in the name of his Most Christian Majesty the Most High, Most Mighty, Most Redoubtable Monarch Lewis XIV. of the Most Christian Name, King of France and Navarre." The French made further captures, and returned to Quebec with 50,000 beaver as a trophy. The Company, ignorant of these



THE FIRST SALE OF FURS AT GARRAWAY'S COFFEE-HOUSE, LONDON, 1671.





proceedings, sent out its annual expedition as usual in 1687, and its ship, the *Churchill*, was captured by the French.

A newsletter was issued at the Company's expense, detailing the events, and carrying reports of them to the remotest part of the kingdom. The Duke of York, who had succeeded Rupert as Governor, had become King James II., and the new Governor, Churchill, afterwards Duke of Marlborough, personally presented to the King a petition from the outraged Adventurers praying for assistance and for satisfaction for the losses and damages suffered.

About this time the French and English kings had appointed a joint commission to examine the disputes between the two nations, and to endeavour to effect a settlement. Little good came of these efforts, and the French, with superior forces, continued their depredations on the Company's forts and ships in the Bay. Captain Moon, the commander of one of these, set fire to his ship rather than be captured by the French. He escaped to the shore, and, with the crew, made his way to New Severn, one of the Company's forts, which, in 1689, was surrendered to the French Commander.

It was in this year that the English Revolution placed William of Orange on the throne, and the Company renewed its claims for reparation. The Memorial said "It will appear, by a true and exact estimate, that the French took from the Company in full peace between 1682 and 1688, seven ships with their cargoes, and six forts and factories, from which they carried away great stores of goods laid up for trading with the Indians. The whole amounts to £38,332 15s." The English King embodied in his Declaration of War these attacks upon his subjects and the ill-treatment which they had received.

The Charter had been granted by one Stuart King, and another had been Governor of the Company; hence, at the beginning of William's reign, the Adventurers sought and obtained the confirmation of their Charter. The nominal capital of the Company was thereupon increased to £31,500—three times its former amount. The reasons given were that the Company had in warehouse more than the value of their original stock; that their outfit for the year was of about an equal value to this, and that the trading would double it; that "our factories at Port Nelson River and New Severne are under an increasing trade; and that our Returns in Beavers this year (by God's Blessing) are modestly expected to be worth £20,000." Other assets were enumerated; and lastly there is "our just Expectancy of a very



considerable reparation and satisfaction from the French . . . . which upon proof, hath been made out above £100,000."

In many important respects the French had had much the better of the conflict, and the Company had suffered heavily ; but the French were losing money over the fur trade, largely because they were carrying their furs overland and had no ships, while the Company's traffic with the Bay was overseas. Some attempt was made to remedy this state of things, but without success. In the autumn of 1691 fourteen French ships arrived at Quebec under Admiral Tast, with the idea of capturing Hudson Bay. For one thing they were, as usual, too late in the season, and for another thing, Iberville, the somewhat melodramatic hero of the former raids, refused to take any part in the enterprise, and the expedition to the Bay was abandoned. A single French frigate, however, arrived at Port Nelson, which was commanded for the Company by Governor Phipps ; nearly the whole of the garrison were absent on a hunting expedition, and rather than surrender, Phipps burnt the fort, together with merchandise valued at about £8,000, well knowing that, without the goods, the French could not procure furs from the Indians. The Frenchman recognised the ruin of his hopes ; a few hatchets and knives were the reward of his enterprise.

If in one sense the contest was being waged between the two nations, it was, in effect, between the Hudson's Bay Company and the French Compagnie du Nord. The French company was poor, and was unable to use to advantage the success of the French arms. The British Company, on the other hand, was—as its opponents well knew—a strong and capable corporation. A pamphlet issued by the French spoke of the Hudson's Bay Company being composed " of opulent merchants and noblemen of the first quality ; and it is known that the King himself is part proprietor. . . . So great are its profits that each member is worth at least £50,000 English sterling above what he was before he embarked in the fur traffic."

Fort Nelson was regarded as the key to the situation, and it was at last captured by the French in 1693 and renamed Fort Bourbon. Once more the Hudson's Bay Company appealed to the English King, and in 1696 the fort was recaptured, together with a vast quantity of furs.

The French in their turn appealed to their King, with the result that four ships were sent to attack Fort Nelson. Four of the Company's ships—the *Hampshire*, the *Hudson's Bay*, the *Dering*, and a fire-ship,

the *Owner's Love*—arrived in the Strait only forty hours before the French. A fierce fight took place lasting the whole of the day, and was followed by a terrific storm; most of the vessels were sunk or wrecked, and the remnant of the crews made their way to the shore. The French were in superior numbers, and, after a strong resistance, Fort Nelson passed once again into the possession of the French.

The rule of the French at Fort Bourbon was not always wise and successful. In 1708 they experienced the hostility of the Indians, by whom a number of the party were massacred and perhaps devoured. French vessels had failed to reach the Bay, having been intercepted by British ships, and the plight of the French at the fort was deplorable in the extreme. That of the Indians was still worse. They had become dependent upon white men for supplies, and after a few more years of French occupation, they would have disappeared from the forests and rivers of the Bay; many hundreds lay dead within a few leagues of the fort, and, pressed by a long endured hunger, the parents had killed their children for food.

Under the Treaty of Ryswick, which was signed in 1697, peace between England and France was restored; but, by its provisions, a severe blow was struck at the prosperity of the Hudson's Bay Company, since it was deprived of that important quarter of the Bay known as Fort Nelson, or Bourbon. The Merchant-Adventurers, losing neither hope nor courage, presented petition after petition to the King, the Commons, and the Lords of Trade and Plantations; little relief was forthcoming, and the Company pinned its hopes on a fresh outbreak of hostilities. This was brought about by the promise of the French King to acknowledge the son of James II. as King of England. Fort Albany was unsuccessfully attacked by the French in 1704, and the French at Fort York had fallen into a desperate state. Once more the Company petitioned the Crown, and the sympathies of Queen Anne were secured by John Robinson, the Bishop of London; the Company was asked to state the terms it desired, and yet another memorandum was prepared setting out the Company's claims. It was asked that no French vessel should be allowed to pass into Hudson Strait or Bay; that York and all other forts should be given up, and "that no wood-runners, either French, or Indians, or any other person whatsoever, be permitted to travel, or seek for trade between the limits hereinafter mentioned." The Queen and her Ministers were convinced of the justice of the Company's claims. The Lords of Trade informed the



Company that we "are humbly of opinion that the said Company have a good right and just title to the whole Bay and Streights of Hudson." By the Treaty of Utrecht, signed in 1713, Hudson Bay was ceded to Great Britain. The Committee was in session when a messenger came hot haste from Whitehall with the good news; a general court of the Company was summoned for a few days later. Instructions were sent by the French King for the surrender of the forts to the Company, and on June 5th, 1714, many of the Adventurers went to Gravesend to wish godspeed to Governor Knight and to his deputy, Henry Kelsey, who had distinguished himself for bravery in his youth. "The Committee," it is recorded in the minutes, "delivered to Captain Knight, her Majesty's Royal Commission, to take possession (for the Company) of York Fort, and all other places within the Bay and Straits of Hudson. Also another Commission from her Majesty constituting him Governor under the Company, and Mr. H. Kelsey, Deputy Governor of the Bay and Straits of Hudson aforesaid." Knight took with him the French King's order to the commander at York Fort to deliver the fort to the Governor appointed by the Queen, and once more the Company entered into full possession of the Bay.

It was over thirty years before England and France were again at war. Hostilities broke out in 1744, and it was natural to expect that the conflict would extend to the Transatlantic possessions of the two Powers.

A general court of the Adventurers was held, at which no fewer than seventy were present, in order to take steps to avoid a repetition of the disasters of fifty years before. For various reasons little help was to be expected from the Government, and the Company prepared to defend its rights, with its own power, against both France and Spain. Instructions were drawn up by the Committee and despatched to the chief factors in the Bay; a few sentences may be quoted from one of these, in illustration of the temper of the Company at the time and of the precautions adopted: "We direct that you fix your cannon in the most proper places to defend yourselves and annoy an enemy, after which you are to fire each cannon once with powder to see how they prove, and instruct your men to the use of them without firing; and that you keep them constantly loaded with powder and ball, ready for service. You are also to keep your small arms loaded and in good order, and at hand, to be easily come at." The loaded arms are to be drawn once a month and well cleaned; the men to be exercised once

a week till well disciplined, and afterwards once a month. It is apprehended that the attack will be by land in the winter from Canada, in which case the enemy will not be able to bring any cannon with them. If "Notwithstanding a vigorous resistance you should have the misfortune to be overpowered, then you are to nail up the cannon, blow up the House, and destroy everything that can be of service to the enemy, and make the best retreat you can." "We also direct you, for your better security, at all times to keep two Indians in the factory with civil and kind usage, and send them out every morning for intelligence, to a proper distance, so that they may return in the evening ; and provided that they do not return that it be an alarm to you and that you thereupon prepare yourselves for a vigorous defence." Continual correspondence was to be kept up between the various forts and factories, and a store of provisions was to be provided, "particularly geese, which we find you constantly employ the Indians only to kill for you, and which we are dissatisfied with ; that being such a material article, you ought always to blend some of your people with the natives in the goose season, that they may understand how to kill them, and thereby lessen your dependence on the native hunters." Had an enemy appeared, his reception would have been very different from that experienced by the French on former occasions, but the crisis passed without any incidents of importance.

The war with France revived the hopes of the Jacobites and led to the rally of the Highland clans to the standard of Prince Charlie. A month after his defeat and escape to France, a motion was submitted to the Governor and Committee of Adventurers, ordering the confiscation of the stock held by the heir of James II., who had been the second Governor of the Company. His dividends had been received by him under the name of "John Stanion," who, in 1746, ceased to figure as an active partner of the Company.

The stirring events that were taking place in many parts of the world have little to do with our story until we come to the conquest of Canada in 1760. The victory of Wolfe at Quebec and the capture of Montreal by Amherst put an end to the dream of a French Empire in America, in accordance with the plans of Pitt. The effect upon the fur trade of the French was at once apparent ; their trading posts were deserted and the Indians, with their canoes and sledges loaded with furs, sought, but could not find, those with whom they had formerly traded. They were filled with despair, until a wise Indian spoke words



which have often been quoted and which had a lasting effect upon the natives. "Fools, why do you trust these white traders who come amongst you with beads and fire-water and crucifixes? They are but as the crows that come and are gone. But there are traders on the banks of the great lake yonder who are never absent, neither in our time, nor in the time of our grandfathers and great-grandfathers. They are like the rock which cannot be moved, and they give good goods and plenty, and they are always the same. If you are wise you will go hence and deal with them, and never trust more the traders who are like fleas and grasshoppers—here one minute and the next flown leagues away."

Yet, once again, in 1782, the French attacked the Company in the Bay. Fort Prince of Wales and York Factory were ignominiously surrendered. The French agreed to compensate the Company for the loss, but the debt was never paid. This was a temporary episode, and the Company's occupation of its forts was not long interrupted.

This closes one chapter of the story of France and the great Company. The next was to begin during the Great War, when, by agreement with the French Government, the Company undertook the purchase and transport of those vast supplies of which an account is given in our closing pages.

There were to be other landmarks of a national character in connection with the United States and with Canada, but before dealing with them we must return once more to London and to the Company's home affairs.

The Governor and Committee held their meetings at many different places—at the Tower, or the Mint, at Prince Rupert's house, or at Garraway's Coffee-house. In 1671, however, more definite procedure was adopted in regard to the time and place of meeting and the keeping of minutes and accounts; it was resolved that the weekly meetings should take place at "The Excise Office," in Broad Street, a building which was afterwards to be known as the Old South Sea House. A feature of the routine business was the selection and supply of the goods for trading with the Indians, and the Company early recognised the importance of sending articles of practical value, such as fowling pieces, knives, hatchets and kettles, in place of relying principally upon beads and kickshaws, which had been used for trading with the natives in other parts of the world. The sale of the furs had also to be attended to, and decisions arrived at as to whether they

should be offered for sale, or withheld in the hope of obtaining higher prices. Another matter which caused frequent trouble with the Committee was the theft of furs, sometimes by the seamen and servants of the Company, and at other times by people who had no connection with it.

The proceedings at the meetings appear to have had little interest for Prince Rupert, who would feign indisposition and take his departure ; but other members took themselves seriously and debated trivial matters at great length ; one of them spoke for a whole hour on the subject of packing furs in barrels or boxes. Vague rumours of the secret proceedings permeated the town, and the most fantastic ideas were held about the Indians with whom the Company dealt ; they were described as picturesque monarchs, attired in sable and ermine, and making treaties after the fashion of the ceremonial East. The petty chiefs were described as great kings and the humble squaws as queens. The Adventurers kept their own counsel, and it was not until nearly eighty years after the granting of the Charter that it became known, to the surprise of the public, that the capital consisted of only thirty-five shares of £300 each.

Prince Rupert, the first Governor, died in 1682, and was succeeded by the Duke of York, afterwards James II. At a general Court of the Company, enthusiastic panegyrics were delivered, and the Court adjourned without proceeding to further business. The Prince had lived to see his project succeed beyond his most sanguine expectations. The Company owned four ships, and other property, and, after paying for these, there was an annual profit at the rate of 200 per cent. of the capital. Rupert had advocated a progressive policy, but the Company had carried prudence to an extreme, and it was only after the death of the first Governor that instructions were sent out to Fort Albany "to choose out from amongst our servants such as are best qualified with strength of body and the country language to travel and to penetrate into the country, and to draw down the Indians by fair and gentle means to trade with us."

The Governor of Fort Albany wrote that he would not be neglectful to obey the Company's orders in this respect, "but your Honours should give good encouragement to those who undertake such extraordinary service, or else I fear that there will be but few that will embrace such employment." The writer was desired not to cast any further reflections on his employers, but nevertheless the Company



was soon to learn the value of a less niggardly policy than it had formerly adopted.

Lack of enterprise in exploration, particularly in connection with the North-West Passage, and the failure to establish trading posts in the interior, were soon to be made the excuse for attacks on the Company's rights under the Charter. These privileges were a frequent cause of controversy from the early years of the eighteenth century up to the final surrender to the natural demands of Canada in 1869.

We have seen already that, shortly after the accession of William III., the Company applied for a confirmation of the Charter by Parliament; this was unsuccessfully opposed by the Feltmakers Company, and, at the expiration of the seven years for which the confirmation was given, the Feltmakers again showed their enmity, the reason being that they desired to have the beaver trade in their own hands. Once more the rights of the Company were completely recognised by the King and his advisers. The Company was suffering from the effects of the Treaty of Ryswick, and there were other matters requiring consideration; the Petition was laid on the table of the House, whence it passed to the archives, where it lay forgotten for a century and a half.

A more determined attack was made in 1737; this was led by Arthur Dobbs, an Irishman of ability and courage. He painted glowing pictures of the interior of North America and of the lucrative trade which could be conducted there by London merchants. He emphasized the lack of enterprise on the part of the Company and urged that the Company had made no attempt to discover a new passage into the South Sea, which was a consideration for the granting of the Charter. His eloquence in regard to the North-West Passage won Dobbs a large measure of support; on his initiative an expedition under Captain Middleton, who received his orders from the Lords of the Admiralty, set out in search of the North-West Passage, but did not meet with the desired success. Dobbs now attacked Middleton and published "an Account of the Countries adjoining to Hudson Bay" in 1744; he had caught the ear of the public, and the Company had to defend its position.

Parliament voted £20,000 as the reward for the discovery of a North-West Passage. A subscription was opened for the purpose of raising £10,000 to equip an expedition for the enterprise, and Dobbs

was the leading spirit on the Committee of management. The expedition was a failure and Dobbs was worsted in his attack upon the Company.

His next step was to enlarge the grounds of his opposition by urging that the Company had not extended their settlements to the limits given by the Charter ; had abused the Indians ; neglected their forts ; ill-treated their servants, and encouraged the French.

The Company was able to make a fairly effective reply in regard to the search for the North-West Passage, but were less convincing about the development of their territory. The witnesses who appeared before a Committee to testify to abuse of the Indians and other kindred charges gave no damaging evidence against the Company. Dobbs and his associates petitioned for a Charter for themselves, and promised to undertake extensive colonisation if it were granted.

The report of the Committee to the Privy Council pronounced the Charter unassailable, and stated that the Company had made out a good case against its enemies. It had certainly permitted the encroachments of the French, as, indeed, we have already seen, but the English Government of the day saw the approaching end of French possession in Canada. The Company came through the struggle unharmed, and it is on record that the costs of the defence "amounted in the whole to only £755 5s. 10d., exclusive of Sharpe, the Company Solicitor's services."

From time to time the Company's position was threatened in other ways than by attacks on its chartered rights. Some years before the proceedings initiated by Dobbs, the Company came near to courting disaster by its own acts. During the era of the South Sea Bubble the Committee contemplated a step of the same character as that which was making the fortune of the speculators in the South Sea Company. This was incorporated in 1711, and was granted the monopoly of British trade with South America. Its promoters, who were mainly wealthy merchants, took over nearly ten millions of the National Debt. The Company prospered and became the special pride of the Tories, who regarded it as a rival to the Whig institution, the Bank of England. In 1719 the South Sea Company offered to take over the whole of the National Debt, which then exceeded fifty-one millions sterling. The Government was to pay interest for a limited period ; the holders of the Debt, including annuitants, were to be offered South Sea stock at a high premium in exchange for their Government stock, and the way



seemed clear for affording relief to the Government and making a huge fortune for the South Sea Company. South Sea stock rose rapidly from 128 to 330, to 550, to 890, and at last to 1,000 ; at this tremendous premium the Directors sold five millions of stock. Then the fall came. Thousands of persons were ruined, and many of the leading men of the country were implicated. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was found guilty by the House of Commons of the "most notorious, dangerous and infamous corruption" ; he was expelled from the House and imprisoned. The private estates of the Directors were confiscated, and, under the guidance of Sir Robert Walpole, who had throughout been a sturdy opponent of the scheme, Parliament proceeded to deal with the wreck.

The Hudson's Bay Company nearly succumbed to the temptations of the times. It was proposed to treble the amount of the stock, which was then to be sold to the public at inflated prices. The stock was, in fact, increased from £31,500 to £94,500 ; but the decline in South Sea stock had commenced, and the Hudson's Bay Company deferred its operations. At a meeting held a few months later it was resolved that the "said subscription be vacated ; and that the Company's seal be taken off from the said instrument." Had it been swept into the prevailing vortex, it could scarcely have escaped the fate of so many of its contemporaries ; its enemies were watchful and relentless and might well have secured the revocation of the Charter and the downfall of the Company.

In describing the conflicts with the French we have referred to the difficulties of the Company at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The stock had fallen greatly in value, and this suggested an idea to the Earl of Selkirk, who had plans for relieving distress in Scotland by means of settlements in the New World. He had established a colony in Prince Edward Island, and now resolved to repeat the experiment on the banks of Red River, near the Winnipeg of to-day. With a view to obtaining the necessary land, he contemplated acquiring control of the Hudson's Bay Company. With Scottish caution he secured the opinion of several of the highest legal authorities on the validity of the Charter ; the rights were declared to be unimpeachable and of a far-reaching character. Selkirk purchased several thousand pounds' worth of stock, and, in 1810, made a formal proposition to the Company for a settlement to be made within its territory. The suggestions were strongly opposed, but, at a general Court held in May, 1811,

the stockholders were informed that the Governor and Committee considered it beneficial to grant Lord Selkirk 116,000 square miles of their territory on condition that he should establish a colony and comply with certain terms. The meeting was adjourned in order that the matter might be considered ; at the next meeting the proposition was discussed amidst the greatest excitement and tumult, and was agreed to in spite of a protest by six of the proprietors.

Of these six, three were closely connected with the North-West Company, which—as we have seen—were such formidable rivals in the fur trade. The Nor'-Westers, less successful than they hoped to be in defeating the Hudson's Bay Company in the fur country, endeavoured to assist their cause by action in London. Sir Alexander Mackenzie, the explorer, and at this time a leading spirit of the North-West Company, had been co-operating with Lord Selkirk, apparently with the idea that the stock acquired by the Earl, or some part of it, should pass into the possession of the North-West Company. The plans of the Nor'-Westers miscarried, and they saw, too late, that they had missed the opportunity of securing a large measure of control over the Chartered Company.

The North-West Company was interested in the fur trade and they thought that colonisation would destroy their business ; to what lengths the opposition to the Red River Settlement were to be carried we shall see in the next chapter.

Another landmark in the history of the Company was to be reached in 1821. The struggle between the Hudson's Bay and North-West Companies had been ruinous for both. The Nor'-Westers had shown the bitterest enmity to Lord Selkirk, whose death in 1820 paved the way for an attempt at a union between the two rivals. The opportunity was seized upon by Edward Ellice, a leading partner of the North-West Company, who doubtless recognised that, unless some such step were taken, the collapse of the North-West association was merely a matter of time. The North-West partners held a stormy session at Fort William in 1820, and at least the minority realised that their only hope lay in coming to terms with the Chartered Company. Ellice and the McGillivrays, the London Agents of the Nor'-Westers, had, however, been in negotiation with the Hudson's Bay Company without consulting the powers at Fort William ; the latter sent delegates to confer with the London representatives ; Ellice received them cordially in his office in Mark Lane, and showed them an instrument which he



called the "Deed Poll," constituting an agreement between the Hudson's Bay Company on the one hand and Ellice and the McGillivrays on the other. An amalgamation had been arranged, but the astonished delegates of the North-West Company exclaimed, "This is not amalgamation, but submersion! We are drowned men!"

The Agreement was made for twenty-one years on the basis that each should furnish an equal capital for conducting the trade. In accordance with the practice of the North-West Company, and for some years previously of the Hudson's Bay Company, two-fifths of the profits were to be paid to the chief factors, chief traders, and clerks. There were to be twenty chief factors and twenty-eight chief traders, who were to be appointed in alternate succession from the servants of the two Companies. Everything was regulated and provision was made for all the contingencies that could be anticipated. The rough and adventurous Northmen now found themselves part of a huge machine operated with sleepless vigilance by a Governor and Committee in London. The partnership might have been difficult to work had it not been for the energy and ability of Governor Simpson, whose success in harmonising the forces of the two rivals has already been told.

The status and rights of the Hudson's Bay Company had been prominent in the conflicts with France, and were again to appear as an international problem with both Russia and the United States. In the latter part of the eighteenth century, Russian hunters and traders made their way from the north-east coast of Siberia to "the land of Alaska, also called America; to islands known or unknown, for the purpose of trading in furs; of exploring the country and entering into relations with the inhabitants."

The Charter for the Russian-American Fur Company, which arose out of this expedition, was confirmed at St. Petersburg in 1799. In the thirty years previous to 1817 the Unalaska district yielded over two and a half million seal skins and a prodigious number of other furs. The Hudson's Bay Company recognised, too late, the opportunities it had missed by failing to penetrate to the full limits of its chartered domain.

About the time of the union with the North-West Company, the Americans became active on the Pacific Coast, and once again the rights of the Hudson's Bay Company attracted public attention.

Russia asserted claims to the North Pacific Coast, down to about the level of Vancouver Island. America protested, and from 1821

to 1824 negotiations were carried on between the two Powers. Russia claimed that the boundary question was one between herself and Great Britain, with which the Americans had no legitimate concern. With both Britain and America, Russia agreed to relinquish claims to all territory below the famous  $54^{\circ} 40'$ , and, so far as Great Britain was concerned, to the vast interior land up to the frozen ocean, occupied by the Hudson's Bay Company.

In 1824 negotiations for the ownership of the Northern Pacific Coast were begun between England and America; no settlement was arrived at, and a new conference was held in 1827. The Hudson's Bay Company repeatedly urged the Government to abandon no territory that was rightfully under the British Crown. The Oregon question—as it came to be called—threatened a breach between Britain and the United States, and, at last, in spite of the protestations of the Chartered Company, the Oregon Treaty was concluded between Great Britain and America in 1846. Certain rights of navigation and possession were reserved by the Treaty to the Hudson's Bay Company and other British settlers.

There had also been some trouble with America in connection with the southern boundary line of Canada, which involved the Red River Settlement. Another American action with a bearing upon the affairs of the Company was the Treaty between the American and Russian Governments whereby Alaska was ceded to the United States, and Great Britain lost the opportunity of acquiring what has since proved to be a valuable territory.

Many immigrants had been settling in Oregon, and when the Treaty declared this to be American territory, it was natural that Vancouver Island and British Columbia should come into prominence as places for settlement by those who wished to be under British rule. The Hudson's Bay Company was alive to the situation and made proposals to the British Government that Vancouver Island should be granted to them, in which case the Company would undertake to encourage colonisation. The Government of the day appears to have been staggered by the proposal, which, however, was ultimately agreed to, and for many years, as we describe elsewhere, the Company applied its energies in this district in directions other than the fur trade.

The proposal, however, awakened jealousy and enmity in various quarters, and numerous petitions, memorials, and complaints against the Company were sent to the Government by interested parties and



self-seekers. Earl Grey, the responsible Minister, was a man of high standing and had but one reply ; he said he had gone to the bottom of the matter and believed the Company was honest and capable. His judgment was confirmed by a remarkable despatch from Lord Elgin, Governor-General of Canada, dated June 6th, 1848. " I am bound to state," he wrote, " that the result of the enquiries which I have hitherto made is highly favourable to the Company, and that it has left on my mind the impression that the authority which it exercises over the vast and inhospitable regions subject to its jurisdiction is, on the whole, very advantageous to the Indians. . . . More especially it would appear to be a settled principle of their policy to discountenance the use of ardent spirits. . . . Persons to whom the trading privileges of the Company are obnoxious may be tempted to ascribe to its rule the existence of evils which are altogether beyond its power to remedy. There is too much reason to fear that, if the trade were thrown open and the Indians left to the mercy of the adventurers who might chance to engage in it, their condition would be greatly deteriorated."

The proposals of the Company in regard to Vancouver Island were vigorously debated in the House of Commons. The then young statesman, W. E. Gladstone, assailed the Company with argument and invective, while Lord John Russell enlightened the House as to the achievements of the Company apart from fur trading. The matter was referred to the Privy Council Committee for Trade and Plantations, on whose recommendation the grant of Vancouver Island to the Hudson's Bay Company was made in 1849. Ten years later Vancouver Island became a Crown Colony, and Mr. (afterwards Sir James) Douglas, the Governor appointed by the Company, was retained in the same office by the Crown.

Again in 1857 the opponents of the Company became active and procured the appointment of a Select Committee of the House of Commons to consider " the state of those British possessions in North America which are under the administration of the Hudson's Bay Company, or over which it possesses a license to trade." Many witnesses were heard at great length. The first to be examined was the Honourable John Ross, then President of the Grand Trunk Railway of Canada ; he said " During all the time that I have been able to observe their proceedings there has been peace within the whole territory . . . while, on the other hand, those who have turned their attention to that quarter of the world must have seen that, from Oregon to Florida,

for these last thirty years or more, there has been a constant Indian war going on between the natives of American territory, on the one side, and the Indian tribes on the other. Now, I very much fear that if the occupation of the Hudson's Bay Company were to cease, our fate in Canada might be just what it is with the Americans in the border settlements of their territory. . . . I believe there are certain gentlemen at Toronto very anxious to get up a second North-West Company, and I daresay it would result in something like the same difficulties which the last North-West Company created. I should be sorry to see them succeed."

At the close of the evidence Mr. Gladstone proposed resolutions unfavourable to the Company, but they were negatived by the casting vote of the Chairman. The Committee recommended that the Red River and Saskatchewan districts should be ceded to Canada on equitable principles, the details being left to Her Majesty's Government. The termination of the Company's rule over Vancouver Island was advised, and the advice was not distasteful to the Company. In the interests of law and order and of the Indian population, as well as for the preservation of the fur trade, the Committee strongly urged that the Company "should continue to enjoy the privileges of exclusive trade which they now possess."

The Hudson's Bay Company was reconstructed in 1863 after some lengthy negotiations. The original capital was £10,500; this was trebled in 1690, and again trebled in 1720, when it stood at £94,500. After the union with the North-West Company the stock amounted to £400,000, to which a further £100,000 was added by bonuses by 1853. At a General Court held on July 2nd, 1863, it was resolved that the capital stock be increased from £500,000 to £2,000,000. The negotiations were carried out secretly, and when the news reached the chief factors and traders it created surprise and indignation. Although it was contemplated that the scope of the Company should be somewhat enlarged, it was declared that none of its collateral objects should interfere with the fur trade. In the end a settlement was come to with the wintering partners and the agitation died down.

The most notable landmark of all was yet to come. Ten years had passed since the Select Committee recommended the transfer of part of the Company's territory to Canada. The confederation of the scattered British Provinces of North America was, amidst general rejoicing, made an accomplished fact on July 1st, 1867. In the following



December the Hon. William McDougall, Minister of Public Works for the new Dominion of Canada, submitted to the first session of Parliament a series of resolutions relating to the acquisition of Rupert's Land and the great North-West. The resolutions, which were carried, set out the advantage to both Canada and the Empire of the Dominion being extended to the Pacific Ocean. Settlement, commerce, and the development of the resources of the country were declared to be dependent upon the establishment of a stable Government. It was resolved that in the event of the Imperial Government thus agreeing to transfer to Canada this jurisdiction and control, the legal rights of any corporation or individual should be respected; and that the Indians should be dealt with in conformity with the equitable principles which have uniformly governed the Crown in its dealings with the aborigines.

In the following year Sir George Cartier and Mr. McDougall arrived in England to arrange terms. Cartier expressly declared "that I will never consent to be a party to . . . anything intended to be an act of spoliation of the Hudson's Bay's rights and privileges." The delegates were invited by the Duke of Buckingham, the Colonial Secretary, to visit him at his country seat and discuss the numerous and difficult questions involved. The Duke was, however, shortly succeeded in office by Earl Granville, and almost at the same time the Earl of Kimberley resigned as Governor of the Company and was replaced by Sir Stafford Northcote.

The rights of the Company were indisputable and undisputed; but it suffered from one weakness, which was at the same time the highest tribute to the wisdom and efficiency of its rule. The Company were "absolute lords and proprietors" of a huge territory which it had ruled for two hundred years without any military system. To govern by force of arms would have needed a substantial army, and it never had one.

It was recognised that the cession of its territory to Canada was inevitable, and by 1869 the terms were arranged. The Hudson's Bay Company agreed "to surrender to Her Majesty all the rights of government, property &c., in Rupert's Land, and also all similar rights in any other part . . . of British North America not comprised in Rupert's Land, Canada, or British Columbia." The Canadian Government was to pay the Company a sum of £300,000 sterling on the transfer of Rupert's Land to the Dominion; the Company was to retain its posts

and stations, with a block of land adjoining each, and to receive one-twentieth part of the land within the Fertile Belt, the limits of which were defined. The Company was to be at liberty to carry on its trade in its corporate capacity, without hindrance, and no exceptional tax was to be placed on the Company's land, trade, or servants.

We shall see in the next chapter that this settlement created trouble at Red River, but there can be no doubt that the transfer of the territories to the Dominion was the fitting and inevitable sequel of the Company's own achievement. It was the work of the Company more than anything else that had discovered and developed the great country which at last, and rightly, determined that it must govern itself.

We have left much unsaid that might well be told. There have been famous names connected with the history of the Company, and countless episodes of surpassing interest ; but our purpose is to sketch the life of the Company rather than that of the individuals associated with it.

It is easy to see now that the surrender of its rights under the Charter was a greater privilege, and a greater honour, than either the granting of the Charter, or any other event in the history of what is still the Chartered Company. Its sphere has been widened, not restricted, by the change ; it still cares for and protects the Indians from ocean to ocean, and, by means of its Stores and other activities, is furthering the settlement of Canada and its greater expansion.

The affairs which the Governor and Committee control to-day are not less, but greater, than those of former times. The influence and prestige which it enjoys have been won by its own efforts. They are a distinction and a privilege of a better kind than any that could be conferred by the charter of a king.



# Land and Settlement



THE surrender of the rights under the Charter marked the beginning of a new era in the history of the Hudson's Bay Company. The change took place almost exactly two centuries after the Charter was granted, and, since the change, there have been fifty years in which to see the effect of the cession, nominally to the English Crown, but in effect to the people of Canada.

The fur trade continued and the Company was to become interested in settlement, with which it had previously concerned itself but little. For practical purposes its only contact with such enterprise had been the part that it played in connection with Lord Selkirk's Red River Colony, and the opening up of the Island of Vancouver, which it undertook in 1849 and finally relinquished ten years later.

The fifth Earl of Selkirk had established a number of Scottish emigrants in Prince Edward Island in 1803; he devoted the next few years to plans for settling Scottish Highlanders (who were being turned out of the holdings in Scotland which they had regarded as their own) in the district of Assiniboia, which was ultimately to form the nucleus of the Province of Manitoba. Selkirk married, in 1807, Miss Jean Colville, whose family were holders of stock in the Hudson's Bay Company. We have already seen that he personally acquired stock in the Company, and obtained a grant of about 116,000 square miles of the Company's territory; the area was but little less than that of Great Britain and Ireland. The Earl undertook to find two hundred effective servants for the Company every year for ten years. Certain lands were to be allotted to men who had been in the Company's service, and, most important of all from our present point of view, there was reserved "to the said Governor and Company and their Successors all rights of Jurisdiction whatsoever granted to the said Company by their Charter."

When taking legal opinion on the Charter, Selkirk was advised that the grant of civil and criminal jurisdiction was valid, though it was made not to the Company but to the Governor and Council: that the Company might appoint a sheriff to execute judgment and do his duty as in England, and that constables and other officers might be appointed for the preservation of the peace. The responsibility for

the settlement and management of the new colony was to be mainly Lord Selkirk's, but the Company came to be involved in the many troubles that ensued in consequence of this matter of jurisdiction.

As a preliminary to obtaining the grant, Selkirk had made many enquiries about the Red River district from the partners in the North-West Company at Montreal. They entertained him with their usual lavish hospitality, and gave him the information he sought, although regarding his enquiries as somewhat excessively detailed. They were shortly to turn upon their guest and to accuse him of deep-laid plots for undermining their influence and securing the benefits of the fur trade for himself. Selkirk had no such motives ; he expressed the utmost dislike of the fur trade, and his chief interest was to promote the welfare of his Scottish settlers.

The Nor'-Westers were of opinion that colonisation would be disastrous to the prosperity of the fur trade. This would clearly be the case so far as the district that was settled was concerned, but there were, and still are, territories of vast extent available for fur-bearing animals but unsuitable for settlement. This antagonism to colonisation was, to some extent, shared by the servants of the Hudson's Bay Company engaged in the fur trade ; but, whereas they did little to assist the settlement, the Nor'-Westers and their adherents met it with vigorous and unscrupulous opposition.

It was recognised at the outset that the route to the Red River Settlement would be *via* Port Nelson, and that the immigrants should be conveyed in the vessels belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company. After much difficulty, the first party of emigrants were collected in 1811 ; seventy men were promised from Ireland, but only fifteen reached Stornoway. Excessive wages were offered to Glasgow men, and this caused discontent among the others. The Collector of Customs was related by marriage to Sir Alexander Mackenzie, who had declared his opposition to the scheme, and the Collector put every possible difficulty in the way of the expedition. Some of the more refractory members of the party were ostensibly impressed by a number of marines and hurried off to a man-of-war. The vessels put to sea " with hurry and impatience " on July 26th, and it was September 24th before the first ship was signalled at York Factory. By the time the last vessel had arrived, it was too late to attempt the journey to Red River ; there was not sufficient accommodation for the newcomers at York Factory, and the men were encamped on the north bank of the Nelson River



under wigwams of skins, until such time as some log huts could be erected. The winter was a trying and troubled time, and it was not until July, 1812, that a small party set out for the settlement, ultimately reaching their destination at the end of August, some thirteen months after leaving Scotland. Miles Macdonell, Lord Selkirk's agent, took formal possession of the land from Hillier, of the Hudson's Bay Company. The leader left some of the party to commence a settlement on the west bank of Red River, which is now Point Douglas within the city of Winnipeg, and himself set off for Pembina.

In the meantime the opposition of the Nor'-Westers to the settlement became more active. Stories, true and false, were circulated through their agency, not only throughout the fur country, but also in Scotland, with a view to preventing further recruits being obtained. They were prepared to challenge the rights of Lord Selkirk, which were dependent on the validity of the Chartered rights, which the North-West Company refused to acknowledge. They could proceed by an appeal to law or to force, and chose the latter.

The North-West Company had in its service a large number of Métis, or Bois-Brulés (literally Burnt Wood), who were for the most part descendants of French *voyageurs* who had allied themselves with Indian women. The first brigade of immigrants at Point Douglas were greeted and ordered to halt by a band of armed men, painted, disfigured, and apparelled like savages; they were told that they were unwelcome visitors and must depart. The colonists were terrified, and made no resistance. The painted warriors were the Bois-Brulés of the North-West Company. In the end, the would-be colonists followed their leader to Pembina, where they passed the winter.

At this time England and France were at war, and the Hudson's Bay Company was displaying greatly increased vigour in opposition to the activities of the North-West Company. These facts have a bearing on the events at Selkirk's Colony. In June, 1813, two of the Company's ships—the *Prince of Wales* and the *Eddystone*—set sail for the Bay. On the former typhoid broke out; the doctor was one of the first to succumb, and there were many other deaths. On the *Eddystone* there was a mutiny, and the sailors and passengers sought to obtain possession of the ship and dispose of her to the enemies of England. The vessels arrived at last at Churchill River, and, like the former party, wintered on the Bay, ultimately reaching the settlement in the autumn of the following year. Here they were met by Governor Macdonell,

who held a joint appointment from Selkirk and the Hudson's Bay Company as first Governor of the new colony. The Governor allotted each head of a family one hundred acres of land and an Indian pony ; the men were given a musket, bayonet, and ammunition, and told to resist by force any aggressors who might appear. The colonists had come out with the idea of engaging in agricultural pursuits, but practically no farming implements were available, and the second brigade, like the first, made their way to Pembina for the winter. During the winter Macdonell issued a proclamation, prohibiting any provisions being taken out of the Hudson's Bay Company's territory, as they were needed for the support of the colonists.

The North-West partners received this proclamation at Fort William ; they resolved to tempt as many of the immigrants as possible into their own service, and to persuade the Indians to rise and destroy the settlement. They also declared their intention of seizing the Governor and carrying him to Montreal as a prisoner.

Two of the North-West partners, Duncan Cameron and Alexander McDonell, were selected to carry out the plans against the settlement ; the latter wrote " Something serious will undoubtedly take place. Nothing but the complete downfall of the colony will satisfy some, by fair or foul means." These two arrived at the North-Western Fort Gibraltar, within half-a-mile of the Red River colony. Cameron remained there for the winter, and ingratiated himself among some of Lord Selkirk's settlers, with whom he could talk in Gaelic. Cameron went to the interior, and returned in the spring with a party of Cree Indians. The two partners dressed themselves in British military uniforms, and pretended to hold the King's Commission ; they made a great show of force, being constantly accompanied by a number of Bois-Brulés, with the half-breed, Cuthbert Grant, as their leader. The fort of the colony was attacked, and the Nor'-Westers carried out their threat of capturing Governor Miles Macdonell and sending him as a prisoner to Montreal. The wanton aggression continued ; the colonists were frequently fired on ; the farmhouse was pillaged ; farm labourers were arrested ; horses were stolen and cattle driven away. At last the colonists decided to migrate, and made their way, under an escort of friendly Indians, to a trading post on Jack River belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company. On the day after their departure, the buildings in the settlement were destroyed with the exception of Fort Douglas.



The Nor'-Westers at Fort William were elated with the news ; they gave large rewards to many who had assisted in the proceedings, but failed to keep their promises to many of the settlers who had been induced to break their contracts and take sides against the Earl of Selkirk.

In 1816 a new brigade of immigrants arrived from Scotland. They were accompanied by Robert Semple, a man of ability and culture, who had been appointed by the Hudson's Bay Company to the chief control of all the factories in Rupert's Land.

About the same time Lord Selkirk was on his way to Red River ; he applied to Sir Gordon Drummond, the Governor-General of Canada, for military protection for the settlers. The step was a significant one. The Hudson's Bay Company had maintained peace throughout its vast territory without the employment of an armed force, but the conditions changed when colonisation was attempted at Red River. Drummond refused to render any assistance, perhaps because he dreaded the powerful influence of the North-West Company. Selkirk felt himself compelled to adopt other measures. The hostilities with America had terminated, and hired European soldiers were deprived of their normal employment. Selkirk arranged with some of their officers for the engagement of about eighty of these men, who were to receive monthly pay and have land assigned to them at the settlement. With this body of men Selkirk proceeded on his way to Red River.

Early in March, 1817, Governor Semple journeyed West to inspect some of the Hudson's Bay Company's forts, leaving Colin Robertson in command at Fort Douglas. Robertson, suspecting a plot on the part of the Nor'-Westers, attacked some of their posts, took prisoner their leader Cameron, and pulled down their Fort Gibraltar.

The other North-West partner, Alexander McDonell, assembled half-breeds from every quarter for a final attack upon the colony at Red River, with a view to its complete extermination. McDonell himself remained in the background and entrusted the temporary leadership to Cuthbert Grant, who encountered Governor Semple at Seven Oaks. Semple, and a score of men, with arms but with no ammunition, went out to parley with the half-breeds ; Semple himself and most of his followers were killed, and on the bodies of the dead the revolting horrors of the savages were practised. The news spread consternation at Fort Douglas. Miles Macdonell, who was again in charge, would have resisted the contemplated attack on the fort, but

his followers lacked courage, and the colonists to the number of nearly two hundred set out for Hudson Bay. They were intercepted by a party of Nor'-Westers, who stole some of Governor Semple's letters, and placed the leaders under arrest. The victors of the moment arrived at Fort William, and it may well have seemed that the complete downfall of Selkirk's colony had been accomplished. The rejoicings were premature ; the Earl of Selkirk, with four officers and eighty soldiers, was on his way to Red River, and, as a magistrate for the country, he issued warrants for the arrest of some of the North-West partners. On Selkirk's arrival at Fort William he released the prisoners ; arrested McGillivray and other leaders, sent them under escort to York, and captured Fort William. This was—in Selkirk's own words—" A fort which had served, the last of any in the British dominions, as an asylum for banditti and murderers, and the receptacle of their plunder."

The influence of the North-West Company in Montreal was, however, dominant ; those whom Selkirk had taken prisoner were released on bail, and warrants were issued for the Earl's arrest. The comment of one of the North-West partners on the proceedings was, " That canting rascal and hypocritical villain, Lord Selkirk, has got possession of our post at Fort William. Well, we will have him out of that fort, as the Hudson's Bay knaves shall be cleared, bag and baggage, out of the North-West. And this in short order, mark my words."

The English Government at last decided that this state of things must be terminated, and a despatch was sent to the Governor-General instructing him to restore the buildings and property to the respective proprietors. Two officers of high character were appointed Commissioners to carry out these instructions and restore order. The North-Westerns set themselves to erect buildings in place of their destroyed Fort Gibraltar, while Selkirk settled the soldiers at Red River and made a Treaty with the Indians. But order was not restored, and there were numerous examples of lawlessness in 1817 and 1818, in the course of which the North-Westerns fared worse than their opponents.

At Montreal, however, the North-West Company was more successful. The murderers of Governor Semple were, after some years, brought to trial, and in each case the jury brought in a verdict of Not Guilty, while in a number of civil suits, verdicts for heavy damages were obtained against Lord Selkirk.



The Red River Settlement met with other troubles. In the winter of 1817 the colonists were forced to migrate to Pembina because of a scarcity of food. For two years in succession, clouds of grasshoppers descended, and every green thing perished. Once more the colonists had to leave their homes and must have starved but for the care and bounty of the Hudson's Bay Company. It was not until 1822 that the Settlement began to flourish, but the news of this prosperity never reached the founder. Selkirk returned disheartened to England ; his health failed, and he sought repose in the South of France. He died in April, 1820, leaving behind him many friends and admirers. After long delay, history has given its verdict on his character and conduct. He made many mistakes, which were obvious and self-confessed. He was not one of the greatest men of his age. He had to work with and against men of natures much inferior to his own. There remains, however, no doubt of the generosity and integrity of his original aims. The beginnings of colonisation are often unattractive ; the inevitable failures are exaggerated and condemned ; the successes, which may have beneficial consequences through a long future, pass without recognition. He fought a discouraging, uphill fight, and was beaten in the end ; yet he played no mean part in the accomplishment of a national purpose of great value.

For a while his family attempted to carry on the work, but in 1834 Assiniboia was retransferred to the Hudson's Bay Company. The death of Selkirk paved the way for union between the Hudson's Bay and North-West Companies, which has already been described.

Red River was to be once again the scene of trouble with the half-breeds. When, in 1869, the territory of the Hudson's Bay Company was to be ceded to Canada a rebellion broke out headed by Louis Riel, who captured Fort Garry, and set up a provisional government. A difficult situation was created, which was handled with the utmost ability by Donald Smith, whose name goes down to history as Lord Strathcona. He entered the service of the Hudson's Bay Company as a junior clerk, and roughed it from 1838 to 1851 at Hamilton Inlet, Labrador ; he spent ten years on Hudson Bay, becoming Chief Factor, and in 1868 was appointed Resident Governor, with headquarters at Montreal. At the time of the Riel rebellion he was sent by the Governor of Canada to Red River with wide powers as Special Commissioner ; he reported that it would be necessary to send troops, and, in the meanwhile, kept cool in the face of a very ugly situation.



THE LATE RIGHT HONOURABLE DONALD ALEXANDER SMITH, FIRST BARON  
STRATHCONA AND MOUNT ROYAL, G.C.M.G., G.C.V.O., F.R.S., LL.D., P.C., D.L.





It was mainly owing to his tact and diplomacy that the lives of numerous prisoners were saved ; that the position of the rebels was gradually undermined, and that the relief expedition under Colonel (afterwards Field-Marshal Lord) Wolseley, had no fighting to do. Apart from the rebellion, there were difficulties with the Company's traders, who feared that, on the surrender to Canada, their rights and privileges might be sacrificed. Donald Smith won their confidence and effectually asserted their claims. On the first election to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba he was returned for Winnipeg, and became, in the following year, one of the representatives of the Province in the Dominion House of Commons. In 1889 he was elected Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, a position which he retained until his death in 1914. He was raised to the peerage with the title of Lord Strathcona in 1897.

In the previous chapter we have referred to the proposal by the Hudson's Bay Company to undertake colonisation on a large scale in what is now British Columbia. The project was too ambitious for the British Government to sanction, but, in 1849, the Island of Vancouver was granted to the Company for a term of years. The conditions of the grant were that the Company should pay a yearly rent of 7s. ; should colonise the island, and dispose of lands at a reasonable price, except such as might be required for public purposes. Nine-tenths of the money received from the sale of land was to be applied to the development and improvement of the island. Progress was to be reported every two years, and, if the conditions of the grant were not fulfilled, it could be cancelled on specified terms.

The settlement of the Oregon question led to provision for colonisation further north becoming a matter of importance from the point of view of the British Government. The representative of the Company was James Douglas, a man of long experience and great ability ; at the request of the Government, Sir John Pelly, the Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, recommended his appointment as Governor of the Island. This recommendation was not accepted, and the appointment was given to Mr. Blanshard. The position of the latter was not a comfortable one ; his tenure of office was unsuccessful, and he soon resigned ; Douglas was thereupon appointed Governor by the Crown and retained his position as Chief Factor for the Company.

Colonisation had proceeded very slowly, and, unless it increased, the grant of the island to the Company would terminate in 1854. Several



of the leading officers of the Company thereupon took up land, but after some four years, less than 20,000 acres had been applied for.

The old difficulty of civil and criminal administration again arose, and a Chief Justice was nominated, whose appointment was ratified by the Home Government. Presently it was thought advisable to elect a representative Assembly of freeholders, but Douglas wrote to the Secretary of State, "There will be some difficulty in finding properly qualified representatives, and I fear that our early attempts at legislation will make a sorry figure, though at all events they will have the effect you contemplate of removing all doubts as to the validity of our local enactments." Douglas loyally carried out all the instructions from the Home Government, but formal machinery was none too well suited to the conditions of those early days. Douglas, like other great servants of the Company, had been accustomed to maintain peace and to inaugurate prosperity by force of character, by shrewd ability, and by the influence and prestige of the Chartered Company; but sooner or later, with the increase in white settlers, the accepted methods of government had to be adopted, and it is not surprising that the machinery was at first less effective than the more personal rule.

The Legislative Council and House of Assembly met on August 12th, 1856; an Address was delivered by Governor Douglas, who had the prescience to declare "The interests and well-being of thousands yet unborn may be affected by our decisions, and they will reverence or condemn our acts according as they are found to influence, for good or evil, the events of the future."

The question whether the Company's lease of the island should continue now arose for settlement, and, as we have seen, it was decided by a Select Committee of the House of Commons that it should be terminated; a decision by no means unacceptable to the more far-sighted members of the Hudson's Bay Company. At about the same time the gold excitement broke out at the Fraser River on the mainland. Douglas, as both Chief Factor of the Company and the nearest representative of the British Crown, had to deal with the difficult situation that arose.

In the latter capacity Douglas had no organisation, and no establishments. Moreover, it was necessary to act sufficiently in accordance with precedents and formal methods as to win, if necessary, the approval of the British Parliament. As Chief Factor of the Hudson's Bay Company, Douglas had men upon whom he could rely, a certain

number of trading posts, a freedom of action, and a tradition of meeting new conditions by any appropriate and available method, which stood him in good stead.

It was necessary to keep in order thousands of men who were flocking into Victoria and onwards towards Fraser River ; their appearance threatened the destruction of the fur trade, which was the chief interest of the Company ; the men themselves were largely impatient of discipline or restraint. Problems of the most varied kind were pressing for solution day by day, and it was for Douglas to solve them by such methods as he could. He might need to employ the resources of the Company, he might require to exercise his authority, as representative of the Crown, and it may well be that Douglas must have asked himself many times in which capacity he was acting in the various steps which he took to meet the fresh conditions that were continually arising.

Fortunately, he had the unlimited confidence of both the Crown and the Company, and when any series of actions had proved successful, there was little inclination to enquire too minutely in what capacity, or on what authority, he had been acting. As Chief Factor of the Company he rendered to himself, as representative of the Crown, services of the first importance ; and as representative of the Crown, he supported his own actions, as Chief Factor of the Company, with an authority they would otherwise have lacked. It is by this kind of illogical, undefined, efficiency that the British Empire has been continuously originated and developed, but dominated always by the idea which Lord Lytton, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, continually impressed upon Douglas that, while " you will be empowered both to govern and to legislate of your own authority, you will distinctly understand that this is a temporary measure only. . . . Popular institutions should be established with as little delay as practicable."

Unexpected conditions, for which it has not been possible to make previous provision, must be met as circumstances permit, but at the earliest moment they must give way to the self-government of a free people. In the achievement of such results no tradition could be more effective than that of the Hudson's Bay Company, and no individual has ever applied them with greater effect than Douglas. It was, however, natural and essential that the Home Government should decide that his dual official position should cease ; and once again the Company supplied to the State, this time in the person of Sir James Douglas, an administrator of high character and great ability.



The Hudson's Bay Company was not again to undertake such quasi-responsibility for settlement as attached to it at Red River, nor the direct control which it assumed in the Island of Vancouver. It was, however, to be of greater assistance to settlers by those less formal methods which are better suited to its genius and its traditions.

For two hundred years its activities had been almost entirely confined to the fur trade, and in that period it discovered and laid the foundations for the development of the Dominion of Canada. Then, by force of circumstances, and by agreement, it surrendered a portion of its ancient rights. It seemed to some as if the glories of the old Company had departed, but, instead of this, the surrender marked the opening of a new era in which the fur trade was to continue, and two features—those of land and stores—were to begin. The record of fifty years is proof sufficient that the greatness of the Hudson's Bay Company, so far from ending, was commencing afresh.

# Forts and Stores



IN a map published by the Hudson's Bay Company in 1914 there are no less than one hundred and thirty-two forts. They extend from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and from the American boundary into the Arctic Circle. Almost each of these forts has an individual history that would be worth the telling. With few exceptions they were established for the development of the fur trade with the Indians. Little groups of men wandered into unexplored regions and hurriedly erected forts with defences that were often needed and tested. Hundreds of men, some of whom have become famous, have passed many years of their lives in these outposts, and in the chapter on "Life in the Service" we have seen something of the dangers and adventures of these pioneers.

When, in 1668, the *Nonsuch* anchored at the south of James Bay their first task was to erect a palisaded fort, which they called after King Charles. Not far away is the famous Moose Factory, which has been the scene of many conflicts with the French. A place where, if we will but recognise it, much history has been written, is York Factory at Port Nelson on the western shores of Hudson Bay. It stands in a large square of some six acres, lying along Hayes River, and shut in by high stockades. There is a lofty platform to serve as a look-out for the coming ship, which is the great annual event of the year.

An important rival farther north is Fort Churchill, with its well-built walls and formidable bastions. Some idea of life in the forts is given elsewhere and need not detain us now. The Company's establishments on the Bay were exposed to greater risks than those elsewhere. Not merely might there be occasional trouble with the Indians, but at various times they were seized by the French, though ultimately restored to the Company.

For a short time Fort Prince of Wales on Churchill River was an important establishment. In 1718, a wooden fort was erected, to give way shortly afterwards to one of the strongest forts on the continent. It was built from the plans of military engineers who had served under Marlborough, and it was originally intended to have the walls 42 ft. thick at their foundation. By direction of the Governor, the dimensions were reduced to 25 ft., but these proved inadequate, so it was in part



pulled down and rebuilt according to the original plans. It was destroyed by the French and never rebuilt ; to-day its ruins mark the most northerly fortress on the Continent of America, scarcely inferior in strength to Louisburg or to Quebec. Its site was admirably chosen, its design and armament were once perfect ; it is interesting still as a relic of bygone strife, but useful now only as a beacon for the harbour it failed to protect.

We may recall that in 1769 the Royal Society of London asked the Hudson's Bay Company to convey two astronomers—Wales and Dymond—in one of the Company's ships to observe the passage of Venus over the Sun. The Society undertook to recoup the whole of the expenses, but the Company charged only for the food of the astronomers, to whom every assistance was given. The observatory was erected at Fort Prince of Wales, and the observation of the transit was entirely successful.

It may be noted that great hopes were built upon the various expeditions to observe transits of Venus. It was expected that they would furnish the most reliable method of determining the earth's distance from the sun, but, for various reasons, the results were disappointing and the measurement has been made with much greater accuracy in other ways. In somewhat corresponding fashion the history of the Hudson's Bay Company exhibits the comparative failure of some courses of action from which much was expected, and the success, in ways that were not anticipated, of comparatively insignificant causes ; so difficult is it to trace the sequence of events among phenomena. Many things have been done in the history of the Company that seemed of great moment, and yet, looking back, we find that the progress of the Company, and its influence upon the development of Canada, have been mainly due to the unpretentious everyday work of the servants of the Company. In no connection is this more apparent than in the life and labour in the forts scattered over the vast territories.

For many years the Company's trading posts were few in number, for the Indians were willing to come long distances to barter their furs. There were, however, rivals in the field—notably the North-West Company—who, with unlimited energy, and by methods not always deserving admiration, intercepted the Indians and endeavoured to cut off the Hudson's Bay Company's trade. Sometimes slowly, sometimes with great vigour, the servants of the Company countered this competition and erected new forts in order to recover and retain the trade.



FORT YORK, 1782.



YORK FACTORY, 1853.



MOOSE FACTORY, 1854.





FORT SIMPSON.



FORT CHIPEWYAN.

On occasion this activity was dictated from London ; at other times it was due to the energies of the leaders on the spot, such as Semple and Simpson. The fort named after the latter may be cited as an example ; it was first built at the mouth of Naas River in 1831, on the Pacific Coast, and is a good example of the style of forts of those days. The Coast Indians were difficult to handle, being of a more vicious temperament than the tribes of the interior ; but, little by little, the servants of the Company brought them under control by methods which were necessarily stern, though invariably just. The Simsheans were a powerful tribe, from whom the other tribes had to be protected and sheltered in the fort, and even as late as the middle of the nineteenth century barbarous orgies were indulged in in the immediate neighbourhood of the fort.

The position was changed a few years after its first erection, and in 1860 a new fort was built, of which an illustration is given ; at that time it was estimated that 30,000 Indians were tributary to it. Twenty years later its name was changed to Port Simpson. It was closed out in 1913, and burnt down in the following year.

Among the most northerly of the Company's posts are those at Herschell and Baillie Islands and Fort McPherson, which are all within the Arctic Circle, and but a short distance from the Arctic Ocean at Mackenzie Bay, which the great explorer, whose name it bears, had reached many years before.

The mention of the Arctic Circle recalls another instance, out of many which might be cited, of the assistance to discovery and research which the Company has rendered. The hospitality to the observers of the transit of Venus has already been mentioned, but many years after that, in June, 1819, Franklin embarked from England for Hudson Bay, and reached Fort Chipewyan on Lake Athabasca. The second winter was spent on the Arctic slopes at Fort Enterprise, and in the following summer the Franklin party descended the Coppermine River, as Hearne had done previously. Three years later Franklin was again a guest at Fort Chipewyan. When, later on, Franklin made yet another expedition, and no tidings came of him, rescue parties were sent out, to whom the Hudson's Bay Company rendered all possible aid, besides sending an expedition of its own in quest of the unfortunate navigator. In this adventure, Dr. Rae, a well-known officer of the Company, played a leading part, and Fort Rae, on Great Slave Lake, commemorates his name.



The Company also organised an exploring expedition in 1836. Governor Simpson was instructed from London to make the preparations, and Dease and Thomas Simpson, a relation of the Governor, were placed in charge. They also wintered at Fort Chipewyan and took possession of a new territory, which was called Victoria Land, "in the name of the Honourable Company and for the Queen of Great Britain."

This Fort—Chipewyan—was established in the rich fur district of Lake Athabasca by Roderick McKenzie, a cousin of the great explorer, and it was not till the union of the Hudson's Bay and North-West Companies that it passed into the possession of the former. It was the centre of a large trade and the starting-point for many notable adventures.

It would be easy to fill pages with stories of the forts, but our purpose is not to give any detailed history of the Company's operations. We can but indicate in brief outline the nature of its activities and its methods, and suggest, rather than describe, the ways in which it expanded and consolidated its position, and the constant changes which it made to meet altered conditions.

Life has been defined as "the continuous adjustment of internal relations to external relations." When this adjustment fails, death ensues.

There are illustrations of continual adjustments to environment among animals in the chapter of Natural History. It is exhibited on the largest scale in the continual modifications made by the Hudson's Bay Company to meet the constant changes, so largely of its own creation, which have taken place in its territories and in the Dominion of Canada during the last two hundred and fifty years.

Maintaining its trading posts in conditions not greatly different from those which prevailed in a remote past, it has extended its trading activities to the modern Department Store. There is efficient adjustment to a new environment that is pre-eminently characteristic of life, and it is made with the greater ease and effectiveness because of the accumulated momentum and influence of the past.

Naturally this change is most marked in the Provinces of most recent development. In Ontario the Company has some thirty trading posts, but no general stores. For a time there was a store at Fort William, but it was destroyed by fire. The place has a long and interesting history, especially in connection with the Nor'-Westers; the chief

meeting place for the partners was formerly at Grand Portage, but when the Treaty with America was found to include Grand Portage in American territory, a new fort was developed at the western end of Lake Superior, and was ultimately named after William McGillivray, the principal partner of the North-West Company. Externally it had the appearance of a fort and internally of a village, from the number of buildings it enclosed. It was a large establishment, with luxurious quarters for the partners, whose festive gatherings, whether at Fort William or Montreal, were characterised by extravagance and hilarious mirth. But they were keen traders who had had personal experience of the difficulties and dangers of the fur trade. It was here that the furs were received and packed, and, from the capacious wharf on the riverside, the outfits for the trade were dispatched. The great hall was capable of entertaining two hundred people, and the yearly carnival was all in all to the *voyageurs* from the posts of the Company, which extended to the Pacific Ocean.

Fort William was the centre of the opposition of the Nor'-Westers to the Red River Settlement, and after the massacre and imprisonment of Red River colonists, Selkirk himself arrested some of the ringleaders and took possession of the Fort. It was restored to the Nor'-Westers, only to come into the joint possession of the two Companies after their union a few years later.

For a short time the Company had, but has no longer, a store at Kenora, which, under the name of Rat Portage, also figured in the fur trade. It stands on the Lake of the Woods and the falls of the Winnipeg River, so troublesome to the fur traders of the past, to-day supply abundant water power for the town. Kenora is on the borders of Ontario and Manitoba, and a near neighbour of the City of Winnipeg. It is here we enter upon the stirring life of the West.

## WINNIPEG

The progress from fort to store epitomises, to an imaginative mind, more than two centuries of eventful history. The trading posts of the Hudson's Bay Company initiated in the north of the American continent the great commerce of to-day and the still greater business of the future. This is true whether particular forts were, or were not, geographically connected with particular stores. Winnipeg, however, affords the most striking example of the direct connection between forts and stores. Did this link not exist, the



story of the Winnipeg forts—Rouge and Gibraltar, Douglas and Garry—would be among the most interesting of the tales of the forts, while the position and growth of the city, and the importance of the Company's Winnipeg establishment, give a corresponding position to the record of the Winnipeg store.

It was at the junction of the Assiniboine and Red Rivers that, as we have seen, Vérendrye established Fort Rouge as early as 1738. It was over sixty years later that, in 1804, the North-West Company built Fort Gibraltar. A few years subsequently, the Hudson's Bay Company constructed Fort Douglas, named after Thomas Douglas, the fifth Earl of Selkirk, founder of the Red River Settlement. Many are the stories that could be told of the conflicts at the famous forts between the Nor'-Westers and the servants of the Company; but the feuds terminated with the union of the two Companies in 1821, and the first Fort Garry was erected as a trading post and settlers' depot; It was an elaborate structure with stone walls, bastions, and port-holes.

The building of Lower Fort Garry, nineteen miles down the river, was commenced in 1831. The motive for the selection of this site is not known, but the Fort was for a time the residence of the Governor of Rupert's Land and the seat of government. In 1835, Upper Fort Garry was begun at the junction of the two rivers, but on higher ground than the earlier structure. This was the centre of business, government, education, and public affairs for more than thirty years, and was the nucleus of the city of Winnipeg. The Fort was sold in 1882 and the front gate, now owned by the city, is all that remains of this historic group of buildings.

For some years after 1821, the Company spent considerable sums in various enterprises calculated to help the settlers. Large funds were consumed in efforts to manufacture buffalo wool cloth, but it cost many times more than English cloth, to which it was inferior. A model farm was established; a tallow company, and a flax and hemp company, were promoted, but without profitable results. The currency of the time consisted largely of "Hudson's Bay Blankets," which were notes for £1, 5s., and 1s. each. In such ways as these the Company went outside its normal routine, as it did subsequently in the Island of Vancouver, with a view to promoting the well-being of the settlers.

It would be interesting if we could obtain pictures of the life of those days; there were the Red River carts with their plodding oxen,



INTERIOR OF FORT GARRY



FORT GARRY.





FANCY DRY GOODS DEPARTMENT



LEATHER GOODS DEPARTMENT.



WINNIPEG STORES (GENERAL VIEW).



DINING ROOM.



DELIVERY SYSTEM.

and a varied stream of many types with manners and costumes of the past. The Sales Shop of the Fort was crowded with customers, who obtained their goods by purchase, or by the barter of furs. Other shops and stores were established, and the local population was dependent upon the Company for their supplies.

It was in November, 1869, that Louis Riel took possession of Lower Fort Garry and established himself and his followers as the government of the country. He made a prisoner of the proprietor of the only paper in the settlement, and issued a number of proclamations addressed to the inhabitants of Rupert's Land. The situation was not handled strongly, or wisely, until the appearance upon the scene of Donald Smith—afterwards Lord Strathcona.

Rupert's Land was to be transferred from the Company to the British Government, and Colonel Wolseley was sent in command of an expedition to quell the Rebellion ; as the troops approached Fort Garry three slinking figures were seen to leave and escape across the Assiniboine ; one of these was " President " Riel, who was to be heard of again. In the words of the commander—afterwards Field-Marshal Lord Wolseley—" The Union Jack was hoisted, a Royal Salute fired, and three cheers were given for the Queen." The transfer of Rupert's Land was complete, and the governing power of the famous old Company was a thing of the past.

In 1874 Winnipeg was incorporated as a city, and since then it has taken full advantage of its unique situation and opportunities. Standing on the eastern border of the prairies, the trade of four vast provinces passes through a narrow belt lying between the international boundary line and Lake Winnipeg. The city stands in the middle of the belt and grows more prosperous and populous year by year.

The fur trade, which led to its beginnings, and for a time retarded its advance (for fur traders have little liking for settlers), still continues ; but the Hudson's Bay Company, profiting by the progress it has done so much to assist, has extended its enterprise to suit the altered conditions. The most interesting of the forts becomes the most important of the stores.

The nucleus of the present establishment was completed in 1881, and greatly enlarged in 1900. The front portion was used for the retail business ; the back part and the upper floors for the storage of furs and general merchandise. In 1911 further buildings were erected



across Main Street, and the floor space was doubled. More recently the Company has acquired a magnificent site on Portage Avenue, consisting of some seven acres, on which it is proposed to build in the near future a store commensurate with the importance of the city, and that will fitly crown the Company's work in Winnipeg. It commenced with Fort Douglas, and will continue into a future offering strange contrasts with the early days and with the troubled history of the past.

In the Province of Manitoba—literally the “Great Spirit's Narrows,” after the narrows on Lake Manitoba—the Company has no other store, though it has many forts, including York Factory, which have been of the first importance in the development of the Province.

### IN SASKATCHEWAN

Passing westward, like the early explorers, we come into the Province of Saskatchewan, the history of which gathers round the Hudson's Bay Company. The open plains of the South were the home of the buffalo, and few posts were established here; but the Saskatchewan River was the great line of communication for the fur traders. The Company has still many trading posts in the Province, but has only established stores at Qu'Appelle and Yorkton.

In many instances the early trading posts of the Hudson's Bay Company developed into important towns and cities; but the establishment of the store at Yorkton was due to the invitation and request of the settlers, who desired a more convenient mode of shopping than the former plan of obtaining supplies from the Company's store at Winnipeg. In response to a formal petition, the Company in 1898 rented a small store, in one-half of which a limited business was conducted. Practically all the settlers in the district were engaged in either horse or cattle raising, and the ranchers brought their cattle to Yorkton, sometimes for upwards of one hundred miles, for shipment to market. When in town, the ranchers bought supplies for the next six months, sending in additional orders by the stage-drivers.

The fur business was an important item in the commercial life of the town, the Indians from Forts Pelly and Cote bringing in beaver, bear, mink, lynx, fox, muskrat, and wolf. The town also became important as the headquarters of numerous surveying and construction parties, engaged in opening up the country, and in 1900 it became necessary for the Company to occupy the entire premises.



YORKTON.



MACLEOD.  
(see page 110.)





CALGARY STORE,  
1884-1891.



LATER STORE,  
1891-1913.



PRESENT STORE.

The extension of railway facilities led to the surrounding country being rapidly filled with homesteaders, with the result that to deal with the increasing business, the Company purchased the building it had formerly leased and enlarged the premises in the fall of 1903.

Further railroad developments quickly followed, and another change of importance took place. The settlers began to realise the great possibilities of growing grain, or mixed farming. In the course of a few years, the country within a radius of many miles was placed under crop, and ranching became almost a thing of the past.

Once again more adequate facilities were needed. New premises were commenced in 1911, and on May 2nd, 1912—the two hundred and forty-second anniversary of the granting of the Charter—the completed structure was opened to the public. The building is a credit to Yorkton, and is both a cause and a consequence of the progress the city is making.

### CALGARY, ALBERTA

In the whole record of exploration and discovery there is no more striking story of long persistence in the face of difficulties than that of Vérendrye and his companions, one of whom, a relative named Niverville, in 1752, established Fort Jonquiere at the foot of the mountains near where Calgary, the oldest city in Alberta, stands to-day. On the site of this fort a century later a post of the North-West Mounted Police was established.

The more definite beginning of the modern city dates from 1876, in which year the Hudson's Bay Company opened its first store close to the site of the old fort. The buildings stood east of the Elbow River, near its confluence with the Bow River, whose crystal waters flow from a Pass in the Rocky Mountains. There were three structures—a store, a residence for the manager, and an interpreter's cabin—which were made of logs floated down the river from the West. Chief Factor Richard Hardisty (afterwards Canadian Senator) was in charge of the Company's operations in Alberta at this time, and Angus Fraser, an experienced fur trader, had immediate charge of the Trading Station.

On the advent of the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1884, a frame store was erected in the new Townsite, west of the Elbow River. The old store was moved and used as a warehouse. The new building was of one storey, 35 ft. by 100 ft., and was considered the finest store west of Winnipeg.



Growth is vigorous in the West, and five years later—in 1889—the Company commenced the erection of a larger building. This new store, at the corner of Eighth Avenue and Centre Street, was of stone construction and two storeys in height ; it was opened in 1891 under the management of the Company's present Land Commissioner. The methods of a modern departmental store were adopted.

As in so many other instances throughout the long history of the great Company, there were rivals in the field. In this case it was the American Trading Corporation, known as I. G. Baker & Co., whose entire interests in Alberta were bought by the Hudson's Bay Company in 1891. The units at Calgary and Macleod were consolidated with the Company's establishments, and Lethbridge became a new branch. The premises at Calgary were again extended in 1895-6 in order to cope with the larger business due to the increasing population.

Then, as so often before, the officials of the Company were faced with a new emergency which they were successful in meeting. The news came of Placer mining discoveries in the Klondike. The Company's officials knew that the overland route was not a feasible one for quickly reaching the Goldfields, but, notwithstanding the efforts to dissuade men from attempting the overland trail, the visions of untold wealth and of the new El Dorado were more than sufficient to overcome the temerity of the thousands who undertook the journey with calamitous results. In spite of difficulties which might well have seemed insuperable, the Calgary management of the Company provided successfully for the outfit of the prospectors, who came from all parts of the world.

Ever since the granting of the Charter the Company had been chiefly concerned with the fur trade, but it realised the need for, and the possibilities of, the departmental store which had been brought about by the development of the country that was due to its own enterprise.

It was recognised that Calgary had an assured future and would become a city of importance. A site was purchased at the corner of Seventh Avenue and First Street West ; the building of a modern store was commenced in 1911 and opened to the public in 1913. The cost was \$2,500,000 ; it is six storeys in height, with foundations that are capable of supporting four additional storeys. It is built of steel and concrete, faced with terra cotta, and has a floor space of 223,000 square feet.

In bygone centuries the Company applied the knowledge and resources of Old World civilisation in its dealings with the North

American Indians. In the twentieth century it places the services of its organisation and its buying agencies in Great Britain, Europe, in the Far East, in the United States, and in Eastern Canada at the disposal of the ever-growing population of the City of Calgary. The facilities it offers are taxed to the full, and it may not be long before another addition is made to the magnitude of the Store, the growth of which we have briefly traced.

### EDMONTON, ALBERTA

It was not until about 1740 that the Saskatchewan—the “ Rapid River ” of the Crees—was first seen by white men. In 1778 Fort Edmonton was established by the North-West Company, whose example was followed early in the nineteenth century by the Hudson’s Bay Company. On the union of the two Companies, Fort Edmonton acquired new importance and became a centre for the North-West, in the neighbourhood of which many of the servants of the Company, both Scotch and French, took up land as settlers. With their ox, or pony carts they journeyed for a thousand miles or more over the natural prairie roads carrying furs to Fort Garry—the present Winnipeg—and returned with loads of merchandise for the Company.

The first fort was hexagonal in form, with pickets, battlemented gateways, and bastions. Here were made and repaired the boats, carts, sleighs and other articles for the annual voyage to York Factory on the western shore of Hudson Bay.

Here, as elsewhere, the fur trade led to the development of the Dominion, and Fort Edmonton—the forerunner of the present capital of Alberta—became the trading centre for Indians that roamed as far South as the Boundary Line and as far North as Lake Athabasca.

We give a photograph of the remains of the fort which was built in 1811 on the river bank close to the Parliament Buildings, as well as of the Fort as it appeared in 1884. In the early sixties the Saskatchewan began to attract miners and other adventurous spirits in search of gold, and after a long delay they were followed in 1874 by the first detachment of the North-West Mounted Police. Here were three stages marking progress—furs, gold, police. Then came whiskey, which led to many a drunken orgy in the old trail followed by the Indians, which has become the Jasper Avenue of to-day.

The Riel Rebellion broke out in 1885, and Edmonton became to the scattered settlers a refuge from the frenzied Indians and Half Breeds.



The town developed on both sides of the river. On the South it was first known as Strathcona, where the C.P.R. arrived in 1891, about which time the Hudson's Bay Company built a small store on what is now known as Jasper Avenue. This unpretentious building was occupied for about three years in conjunction with the old fort, which still flourished as a trading centre.

In 1894 a larger store was built on the site of the present one at the corner of 103rd Street and Jasper Avenue. A year or two after it was completed the rush for Klondike began, and the Company's officials had their resources strained to the utmost in providing outfits for the prospectors. In spite of all warning, these men insisted on attempting the overland trip to Klondike, through 2,000 miles of unexplored wilderness. Of all who started, not more than two or three reached their destination. Many turned back disheartened, but still greater numbers were swallowed up in the vast unknown land of the North, where from time to time the remains of wagons were found, as witness of these attempts to accomplish the impossible.

Rapid development quickly followed, and once again—this time in 1904—a larger store was commenced, and was completed in the following year. In this building, old and new mingled in strange contrast; the Indians and Half Breeds, the traders and the trappers, still contributed the bulk of the business. The elevators were a continual source of wonderment to the Redskins, and it was some time before any of them could be induced to enter them. The large mirrors also excited their suspicions, and it may be that there floated through their minds the sentiment of an earlier Chief, who, on seeing the reflection of himself and others, said quietly, "Now I can see into the spirit world."

On Treaty Day, the traditional custom of tying the money to the end of a poplar sapling and presenting it to the trader in that manner was strictly adhered to by the Chiefs. At this time it was the Manager of the Store who unfastened the Treaty money and then made a short address, bidding them welcome and assuring them of fair treatment, as befitted the Hudson's Bay Company. An interpreter was a necessity in both instances. The Indians would then begin the serious business of purchasing goods to the amount of the Treaty money allowed. Gorgeous coloured cashmeres, plaid shawls, Hudson's Bay blankets, coloured feathers, beads, etc., were always much in demand.



OLD FORT  
EDMONTON.  
BUILT 1811.



THE  
COMPANY'S  
FORT, 1867.

FORT  
EDMONTON,  
1884.



JASPER  
AVENUE,  
EDMONTON,  
1890.





EDMONTON STORE, 1904.



JASPER AVENUE, EDMONTON, 1904.



THE COMPANY'S STORE,  
JASPER AVENUE, 1905.



PRESENT STORE,  
EDMONTON.

The Store at such times presented a sight not easily forgotten. Well-dressed townpeople, in the season's latest fashion, mixed with the bedecked and painted Indians, while squaws, placidly smoking, huddled on the floor.

The railways marked the next step in advance. The C.N.R. entered Edmonton in 1906, to be followed in 1910 by the Grand Trunk ; and in 1913 the Canadian Pacific crossed the river by the high level bridge.

Another storey was added to the building, and in the following year an addition was commenced on the site of the old frame store, a six-storey brick warehouse being erected. There was also a new six-storey addition to the present mercantile establishment.

Even these enlargements failed to keep pace with the growth of the city and the trade, and in 1916 the six-storey warehouse was taken over by the retail store.

This, in brief, is the evolution from a lonely trading post to one of the largest departmental stores in Canada. It is about a century and a quarter since the flag of Hudson's Bay Company first flew on the old fort, as it flies to-day over the modern building, and as it will fly in the future as the growth of the Company's establishment keeps pace with the development of the city.

### LETHBRIDGE, ALBERTA

Unlike most of the cities and towns where the Hudson's Bay Company is represented, there is no long history connecting Lethbridge with the activities of the Company. The connection dates from the year 1891, when Lethbridge was only a small trading station, and the premises were a one-storey frame store about 40 ft. square. With the development of the coal mining areas and of agriculture, Lethbridge became the chief centre for a large territory. The increase in population and trade necessitated more extensive premises, and in 1908 the Company erected on the old site a two-storey brick building. The original frame store was removed to the rear of the property and still serves as a warehouse.

The business continued to increase, and a further addition was made in 1910. Three years later the whole building was remodelled and is to-day one of the best equipped departmental stores in any city of the West of equal size.

Though the Company had no part in the founding of the city, it has taken a prominent share in its development, and enjoys the lion's



share of the retail trade. The working of the coal mines and the development of the prosperous farming community will cause the city to continue to expand and to grow in importance, with the "old Company" always in the forefront of the mercantile life of the community.

### MACLEOD, ALBERTA

The name of MacLeod, is derived from Colonel, afterwards Judge, MacLeod, who, in command of a detachment of North-West Mounted Police, established a post at Old Man River in 1874. The site was about a mile east of the present town, and in the barracks there built, surrounded by a stockade, the police had their quarters for many years.

This station soon became the centre of a little town, surrounding which were some scattered trading posts where adventurous traders did a flourishing trade with the Indians. They secured buffalo robes, leather and provisions, giving in exchange goods of an inferior quality, and Montana whiskey of a quality more inferior still. Gradually the police succeeded in stopping the whiskey traffic; the conditions of the country became more settled, and order was fairly well established.

The vast and fertile prairie, with its great advantages and opportunities for raising cattle and horses, attracted attention in eastern Canada and in the United States. Several substantial companies were formed, which secured vast tracts of land from the Government, and stocked them with many thousands of cattle and horses. After ten years, namely in 1884, the barracks of the North-West Police were moved farther west, and the town followed the Force.

The Hudson's Bay Company opened a small store in 1886; at that time the nearest railway was thirty-two miles off, and the supplies were transported by "string-team," from Lethbridge over a hilly and difficult road. The Company only began operations on a small scale, but, as always, it secured the confidence of the Indians, while meeting with opposition from the "tough" element, which still possessed considerable influence.

Before the coming of the railways, MacLeod was the business centre for a radius of fifty miles north, south, and west. The building of the railroads caused new towns and settlements to spring up, in many of which stores and sources of supply were established, and much of the business which formerly went to MacLeod was diverted to them. This, however, was fully counterbalanced by the arrival of new settlers

and the increase in the acreage under cultivation. Like other Western towns, the city suffered from a real estate boom, from which it is now steadily recovering, and two unfavourable seasons adversely affected the harvest in some districts. Such incidents momentarily check, but cannot permanently stay, the progress of the vigorous life of the North-West.

### VICTORIA, BRITISH COLUMBIA

It is to-day an easy enough matter to cross the Rockies and find ourselves in what is now called British Columbia, the scene of so many dangers and hardships for the early explorers engaged in the vain search for a Western Sea, a short way across which lay, it was imagined, the coasts of Asia.

For many years the Hudson's Bay Company ruled this immense territory with a beneficent despotism, choosing as its headquarters the present city of Victoria on the Island of Vancouver.

The island takes its name from George Vancouver, the English navigator, who in the latter half of the eighteenth century surveyed a large part of the Pacific Coast and circumnavigated the island ; but it was not until the spring of 1843 that a party under Chief Factor—afterwards Sir James—Douglas landed at the southern end of the island and commenced the construction of Fort Victoria. Sir George Simpson had been on the Pacific coast shortly before, consolidating and developing the activities of the Company. The Pacific Coast was at that time reached more easily by sea from England than by land from Winnipeg, and the selection of the most suitable place for the Company's principal station was a matter of much importance. The judgment of Douglas in choosing Victoria has been abundantly justified by the subsequent development of the city, which is the capital of British Columbia. It was in the famous steamer, the *Beaver*, that James Douglas, with fifteen men, crossed from Nisqually and landed near an Indian village, the natives of which were at first much alarmed by the arrival of the vessel. Douglas explained to them the purpose for which he came ; told them of the things he would give them in exchange for their furs, and employed them to obtain the cedar posts needed for the palisades. Three months saw the main features of the fort completed, and it was not long before it grew to a place of importance and attracted much attention.

The difficult Oregon question had not long been settled, and it became clear that there would soon be a large influx of settlers. As a result, it was inevitable that the Company's operations should be of a



much more varied character than usual, and considerable developments took place in connection with farming, coal-mining, the making of surveys, and the building of roads. The island was granted to the Company by the Imperial Government in January, 1849, but presently the settlers concluded that the country should be governed by the people and not by a Company, however beneficent its rule. Consequently, in 1859, the island was reconveyed to the Crown, the cost of roads, schools, and other developments being repaid to the Company.

The building of the fort was soon followed by the erection of a store which was used for both wholesale and retail trade during the various rushes to the goldfields, beginning with Cariboo in 1856 to 1865, followed by others from 1869 to 1872, and then by Klondike in 1897 to 1900.

The supplies were long brought from England by sea, first by the paddle-wheel steamer *Beaver*, which was built in 1835, and later by the *Otter*, which was the first screw-propelled ship on the Pacific Coast.

The necessities of the situation had led the Company into building saw-mills and steamers, to brick-making, and to exporting a considerable variety of merchandise. Plans were made for building a railway and laying a telegraph from Victoria to Fort Garry, the present Winnipeg; but, so soon as opportunity offered, the Company was prepared to hand over such enterprises to competent and reliable people. The Canadian Pacific built the railroad, and, with the Pacific Coast thus connected with Winnipeg, many changes took place in the Company's organisation.

In 1910 the relatively limited business of outfitting for the gold-mines was developed into the establishment of a large departmental store. A programme was prepared, which is still in process of execution, involving a very large outlay. A modern and handsome store was built in 1914, which will be extended as necessity requires. The Company was even more responsible in Vancouver Island than elsewhere for facilitating and developing settlement and progress, and by modern methods suited to the changing needs of the times it will continue to promote the advancement of the great city which it founded, and of the island which for a time it ruled.

#### VANCOUVER, B.C.

In 1666 the Great Fire of London laid the City waste; it raged for five days, during which three hundred and sixty-nine acres of



FORT VICTORIA.  
AN ORIGINAL BASTION,  
BUILT 1843.



FORT VICTORIA, 1843.



FORT VICTORIA STORE,  
BUILT 1859.



THE NEW STORE, VICTORIA.





FIRST STORE, VANCOUVER.



VANCOUVER,  
WHOLESALE  
BUILDING.



PRESENT STORE, VANCOUVER.

houses were destroyed. In the same year Radisson and Groseilliers had their interview with the English King, and four years later the Charter was given to the Governor and Company of Adventurers.

Two hundred and twenty years afterwards a fire swept out of existence the newly established town of Vancouver, B.C., and in the following year the Hudson's Bay Company opened an unpretentious store on Cordova Street, where its activities were confined to the sale of groceries and provisions, wines and spirits.

Four months later the first through train on the Canadian Pacific was brought to the "City of the Lion's Gate." At that time the places of business were confined to Cordova and Water Streets, with saloons largely predominating, with real estate offices a good second, and mercantile stores a poor third.

In 1890 the operations of the Company were extended, and a branch store was established. Even the two buildings quickly became inadequate, and in 1893 a new building at the corner of Granville and Georgia Streets was opened; only two storeys out of four were completed, and it was not until 1897 that the whole building was occupied and a business with many departments conducted.

This development was just in time for the inundation of Vancouver which resulted from the Placer mining discoveries in the Klondike in the summer of 1897. From all over the world men flocked to Vancouver, the starting and outfitting point for the new goldfields, and in 1898 the Company did a large business both in fitting out prospectors and in supplying provisions and mining equipment to larger parties and companies.

There are some who say "The Klondike placed Vancouver on the map," and it must be admitted that the northern development helped materially towards the early prosperity of the city of Vancouver. The normal and inevitable happened. The business of the Company could no longer be conducted in the existing premises, so in the spring of 1899 an addition was made which more than doubled the size of the original building. It became a miniature store and the forerunner of the present establishment.

Six years later it was inadequate, and further extensions of the building were made.

After another short interval still further growth became necessary; this was planned early in 1912, but there were difficulties in securing some additional property, and complicated legal proceedings in



connection with the closing of the intervening lane, with the result that building operations were not commenced until the spring of 1913. In consequence of the War it was not until 1916 that the new premises were opened to the public.

A lengthy real estate boom, followed by the sudden outbreak of hostilities, produced an extremely depressing effect in Vancouver, and pessimism was the order of the day. Still, in 1916 and 1917, the business forged steadily ahead until, by the end of the War, it had increased to an extent which caused every inch of space to be occupied. Arrangements have been made for yet another development; additional land has been acquired, and plans are now under consideration for the extension of the premises which, when completed, will make the Company's store in Vancouver one of the most handsome retail establishments on the North American Continent.

### KAMLOOPS, B.C.

The centenary of the city of Kamloops was celebrated in 1912 because, a century earlier, Alexander Ross established a post at "Cumcloops"—the Meeting of the Waters—at the junction of the South and North Thompson Rivers. He was representing the Astoria Company; his trade during the ten days of his visit was extensive, and he found himself in the midst of a good beaver country.

It was at first called Fort Thompson, after the astronomer sent out from England by the Hudson's Bay Company, who subsequently did much exploration and fixed many positions for the "Nor'-Westers."

The Astorians early took possession of the mouth of the Columbia River and sent an expedition to explore the immense territory lying between the Columbia and the Fraser Rivers. In the fall of 1811, David Stuart ascended the Okanagan to the high land, reached the South Thompson River, and was compelled to spend the winter with the Shuswap and other Indian tribes in the neighbourhood; his report led to the visit of Alexander Ross.

From Kamloops as a centre, traders were sent out towards the Fraser and up the two Thompson Rivers. The "Nor'-Westers" followed in 1812 and built a post close to that of the Astorians, the whole of whose undertaking was acquired from the Astorians in 1813; eight years later, the amalgamation of the Hudson's Bay Company

with their old rivals led to the establishment of the Company in Kamloops.

The veteran fur-trader, John McLeod, was in charge of the district. In 1828 it was visited by Governor Simpson who harangued the Indians and urged them to be "honest, temperate, and frugal; to love their friends the fur-traders, and, above all, to bring in their heaps of peltries, and receive therefor the goods of the Company." It was here in 1840 that Samuel Black, the Company's officer in command, challenged David Douglas, a wandering botanist, to fight a duel because the latter, over his rum and dried salmon, had stigmatised the Honourable Adventurers as "not possessing a soul above a beaver skin." Douglas refused to fight, but met his death shortly afterwards by falling into a pit. Ill-fortune befel the loyal Samuel Black, who was assassinated by the nephew of an Indian Chief "for having charmed his uncle's life away." The Company was roused to vigorous action. The murderer escaped, and the Company decided he must be given up. Old John Tod, one of the best-known names in the history of British Columbia, took charge at Kamloops, where for the occasion he was supported by other veteran officers of the Company. Tod told the assembled Shuswaps that they must capture the murderer, and one of the Chiefs gave a fine example of Indian eloquence, eulogising the dead trader, and ending with the words "You loved him. And now you must not rest until you have brought to justice the murderer." The old Chief was so rigid in expression that his whole frame and features seemed turned to stone. One of the traders said "Never shall I forget it; it is the grandest speech I ever heard."

The murderer was soon secured and placed in irons, but in crossing the river he upset the boat in the sight of the assembled Indians, and, as an old chronicler tells, "The murderer floated down the stream, but died, his death-song hushed by the crack of rifles from the shore." The officers of the Company won the respect, and often the affection, of the Indians, but when the necessity arose their discipline was stern.

Another notable trader in command at Kamloops—1854 to 1864—was Donald McLean, to whom was given what is presumed to be the first trader's charter issued by the Hudson's Bay Company in Western Canada. He may be regarded as the last of the old line of fur-traders, and it was during his *regime* that the gold excitement set in and the fur-traders' preserve was transformed into the home of the colonists. McLean was killed by the Chilcotin Indians in 1864 while assisting the



Government to secure the arrest of the murderers of the Waddingtons Bute Inlet party.

The ruins of the old fort of 1812 may still be seen, and a picture of them is given. Under chief trader McKay a new post was erected in 1861 on the south bank of the Thompson River. Some twenty years later the changed conditions made it necessary to move further East, and a store was built on Victoria Street. This sufficed to meet requirements until 1894, when a further move was needed, and a two-storey brick building was erected midway between Priors Hill and First Avenue.

Reversing the familiar proverb, it may be said of Kamloops that eastwards the course of progress makes its way, and in 1911 the Company moved to its present commodious and up-to-date quarters on the southwest corner of Second Avenue and Victoria Street.

We give a view of this building on the occasion of the centenary celebration in 1912, when the city was visited by the Duke of Connaught, who was at that time Governor-General of Canada.

Here, as sometimes elsewhere, the Company has extended its operations by the purchase of established businesses. In this case it acquired a wholesale tobacco business at the corner of Third Avenue in Victoria Street, which is in addition to the chief Store.

We may wonder at the healthy development of the cities of the West, but in so doing it will be well to bear in mind that it was often purchased at a heavy cost of hardship, and not seldom death, in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company.

### NELSON, B.C.

A large part of the history of the Hudson's Bay Company is concerned with, and developed out of, the fur industry; but, as we have already seen, the search for gold played an important part in the more recent development of both the country and the Company.

This was notably the case at Nelson, B.C. The beginning of the city may be said to date from 1887, when its present site was located by a Mr. Sproat. In the following year, using a rope and some pickets, he roughly subdivided it into town lots, which sold readily. In 1889 an official survey of the town was made and registered.

The famous Hall Mines on Toad Mountain were discovered in 1886, but not registered until the following year, since, to reach the nearest recording office, it took a three hundred mile journey through



RUINS OF ORIGINAL STORE, KAMLOOPS,  
ERECTED 1812.

KAMLOOPS CENTENARY  
CELEBRATION, 1912.



HOME OF THE  
COMPANY, 1861.

PRESENT-DAY STORE,  
KAMLOOPS.







NELSON.



VERNON.

an unsettled wilderness. News of the discovery soon spread and brought about a rush of prospectors, whose searches were often fruitless, though sometimes valuable. Several hundred men were soon employed within a short distance of the city; wages were high; money was plentiful and was freely spent. Nelson then was a typical Western mining town.

After the coming of the railroads, the Hudson's Bay Company opened its first Store in Nelson in 1902, with local management, but under the supervision of the chief trader at Kamloops. The business was started in a rented building on Baker Street, and was limited in character.

Eight years later a two-storey stone and brick building was erected at the corner of Baker and Stanley Streets, where a general business was conducted.

To cope with the increasing trade several departments were expanded, and early in 1919 the Company purchased the adjoining property and made provision more in accordance with the development of the city.

### VERNON, B.C.

The City of Vernon is the chief distributing centre for the Okanagan Valley, known as the "Garden of British Columbia"; but, when the Company opened its first store in the city, the Valley was not known for its fruit, the residents at that time being principally occupied in stock raising.

In the spring of 1887, when the present site of the city was known as the Frank Delory Ranch, the Company started a fur-trading post, giving cash, or goods, for the furs, as well as providing supplies for the ranchers and others in the district. The second store was opened ten years later, and the present quarters were built in 1912. This store and the state of the city present a striking contrast with the conditions of earlier days. Prior to the Company's arrival, supplies could only be obtained, and that with great difficulty, from Kamloops, or from the coast, to which it took six weeks for the pack trains to make the double journey. Naturally, the conditions were greatly changed by the building of the railroad in 1892.

In the early days, the ranchers, trappers, and Indians were given yearly credits, and settled their accounts after receiving the returns for their crops and furs. There were no banks, since all the banking was



done on the coast ; cheques passed as freely as ordinary currency, and might have as many as twelve endorsements before reaching the bank on which they were drawn.

The fruit-growing industry, for which the district is now so famous, may be said to date from the purchase of a ranch, in 1892, by Lord Aberdeen, then Governor-General of Canada, from Mr. Forbes G. Vernon, after whom the town is named. Many thousands of car-loads of fruit are now shipped each season ; hay, oats, and vegetables are grown in large quantities ; and cattle-raising, which has been revived in recent years, promises again to become a flourishing industry. There is every prospect that the Company's Vernon establishment, which is the finest departmental store in British Columbia outside the large cities, will be kept busily occupied in supplying the needs of the residents, for which, however much they may extend, the Company will continue to make adequate provision.

This short story of forts and stores exhibits the change by the Hudson's Bay Company from old methods to new, and—as has been said before—that continual adjustment to altered conditions which is the test and sign of healthy and vigorous life.

# Fights and Wars



HERE is a familiar saying that "Distance lends enchantment to the view." This is especially true of distance in time. The mediæval castle, which was a very practical, and incidentally very uncomfortable, feature of the lives of feudal barons and their retainers, has now become what we call "picturesque." The erroneous and commonplace ideas of earlier times have been changed into legend and romance, while, as Emerson has remarked, parts of seashells, which were at first purely utilitarian, have subsequently become decorative. Such ideas as these suggest the importance and the difficulty of viewing in right perspective the facts with which we have to deal. The history of the Hudson's Bay Company, extending over two centuries and a half, and over a great country that used to be remote, affords ample play for the influences of distance and of time in changing our perspective and in leading us to attach more importance to, or to find greater interest in, the events of the past and the conditions of primitive life, than we do in the greater events of our own day. There is no happier illustration of this contrast than that afforded between the little fights and wars in which the servants of the Company have taken part ever since the Charter was granted, and the overwhelmingly greater activities of the Company during the Great War.

When we try to picture the details of life in the scattered forts ; the occasional conflicts with Indians, the at one time frequent fights with the rival Nor'-Westers, and the warfare with the French, with whom throughout a long part of the Company's history Britain was at war, we find ample material for picturesque tales, and records in abundance of devotion to duty, and bravery of no mean order. The magnitude, though not the quality of these events, sinks into insignificance by comparison with the doings of the Company and its servants in the Great War. Let us, then, consider the record of the fateful years, beginning in 1914, and illuminate them, as it were, by episodes from the earlier history of the Company.

It is difficult even now to put ourselves back into the atmosphere of August 2nd, 1914 ; to imagine ourselves in France, with every man mobilised for the Army, called from his work without notice, and going



forth to serve and save the State. A month later the French Government moved from Paris to Bordeaux, where it remained over three months, until the Germans had been definitely defeated at the Marne. The resources of the State were not then organised for providing the enormous supplies which were seen to be needed for the War. The whole structure of French commerce and finance was disordered and overthrown. At this critical stage, an agreement was negotiated by MM. Ribot and Millerand, the Ministers of Finance and of War, with the Hudson's Bay Company. The significance of this step was not yet realised.

Under this agreement and subsequent modifications, the Hudson's Bay Company arranged credits for the French Government, the proceeds of which were utilised for purchases in Canada, the United Kingdom, the United States, and elsewhere. The Company was appointed the purchasing agent for the goods the French Military administration might require, and undertook to organise steamship services for the transport of goods to France. By subsequent agreements the Company was entrusted with the purchase and transport of the grain, flour, and other foodstuffs which the French Government provided for civilian needs. From time to time, as the requirements of the Allies demanded, the Company voluntarily modified or abandoned any agreements that had been come to, if it appeared that the broader interests would be promoted by doing so.

It was an event of real significance when, on June 3rd, 1668, a small skiff shot out from Wapping Old Stairs and took Prince Rupert and others to the *Nonsuch* Ketch. All hands were piped on deck; a salute was fired in honour of the visitors; the little vessel of 50 tons was exhibited with pride, and its cargo duly inspected. The success of the voyage was toasted by Rupert and his companions over a bottle of Madeira in the Captain's cabin; a few hours later the *Nonsuch* had weighed anchor and her momentous voyage had begun.

We may contrast this with the operations of the Company for the French Government during the five years 1915 to 1919, during which the quantity of goods transported exceeded 13,000,000 tons. If we are to visualise the nature of the Company's achievements, we must picture 11,000 tons being discharged every day during 1918 and 1919, the equivalent of the contents of one *Nonsuch* being unloaded every seven minutes for two years on end.



S.S. "BAYTIGERN" AT BREST.



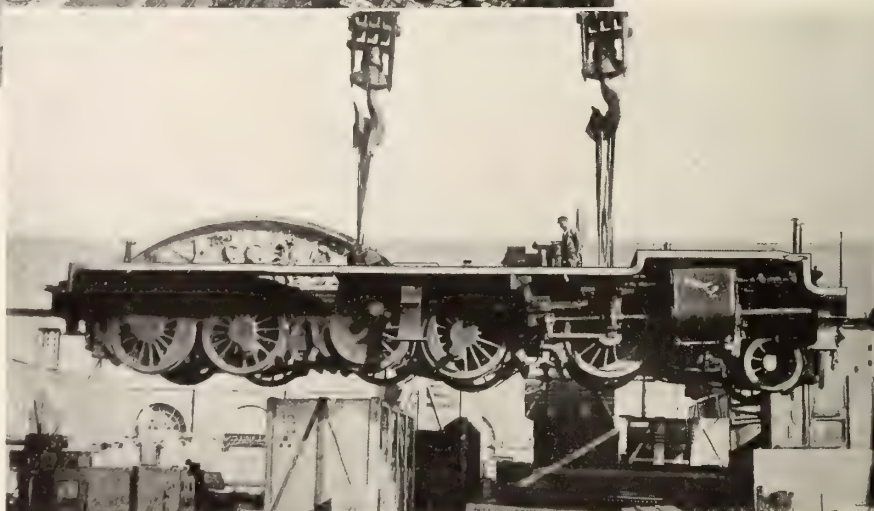
SHED 47, MONTREAL, OCTOBER, 1917—INTERIOR.



WAR MATERIAL AT  
BREST.



S.S. "NASCOPIE"  
LOADING MUNITIONS  
OF WAR AT BREST  
FOR ARCHANGEL,  
DECEMBER, 1916.



S.S. "FORNEBO"  
LOADING LOCOMOTIVES  
AT BREST.

Excluding the cargoes carried by many steamers chartered by the Company, but transferred for employment to other French organisations, the details of the cargo procured and delivered during these five years are as follows :—

|                   | 1915           | 1916             | 1917             | 1918             | 1919             |
|-------------------|----------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
|                   | Tons.          | Tons.            | Tons.            | Tons.            | Tons.            |
| Breadstuffs - - - | 538,000        | 1,372,000        | 1,156,000        | 3,282,000        | 2,345,000        |
| Sugar - - -       | —              | 458,000          | 343,000          | 231,000          | 424,000          |
| Coal and Ore - -  | 45,000         | 145,000          | 582,000          | 257,000          | 301,000          |
| Munitions - - -   | 56,000         | 210,000          | 263,000          | —                | —                |
| Various - - -     | 126,000        | 180,000          | 81,000           | 150,000          | 940,000          |
|                   | <u>765,000</u> | <u>2,365,000</u> | <u>2,425,000</u> | <u>3,920,000</u> | <u>4,010,000</u> |

We may give a thought to where these stores were obtained, and how they were transported. Breadstuffs came from Algeria and the Argentine, from Australia and Canada, from India and Indo-China, from Russia, and the United States of America. Sugar was shipped from Cuba, Java, Martinique, Mauritius, Réunion, and from American and Canadian ports. Timber and wood pulp were drawn from Canada, the Baltic, and the White Sea; coal from England, Canada, and the United States; groundnuts, palm-kernels, and other produce from West Africa and Morocco.

Naturally, many vessels were needed for the carrying out of this great undertaking. The Company purchased and financed on behalf of the French Government, under special arrangements with the British Government, a fleet of approximately 225,000 tons deadweight capacity. The Bay Steamship Company was formed for this purpose. Although more than two-fifths of this tonnage was sunk by enemy submarines, no less than 350 voyages have been made by the steamers of this Company, with a total steaming mileage of over 2,500,000. In addition, a large number of vessels were time chartered, so that at one period the tonnage under the Company's management amounted to over 1,000,000 tons deadweight. This tonnage has been gradually reduced, but at the end of 1919—more than a year after the signing of the Armistice—the Company still operated close upon one hundred steamers with a total capacity of 640,000 tons deadweight.

The supervision of this fleet is not the limit of the Company's transactions in this connection; it is also responsible for loading the vessels allocated directly by the French Government to the Service du



Ravitaillement (Ministry of Food). The number of these has been gradually increasing and now includes a number of French sailing vessels and of ex-German steamers employed in the Australian service. At the end of December, 1919, there were one hundred and forty-eight steamers and forty-three sailing vessels so allocated, aggregating 940,000 deadweight tons, and making the total of the vessels loading under the Company's organisation two hundred and eighty-six, with an aggregate deadweight tonnage of 1,580,000.

In pre-War days the organisation of the Company was confined to Canada, but, for the operations we are here describing, it was necessary to create a network of agencies at the ports of discharge in France, and in the ports of shipment throughout the world. Altogether over one hundred and forty-five agents were appointed, everyone of whom entered into the work with the same spirit of enthusiasm and the same efficiency that animated the Company and all its servants in the service of the Allied Cause.

It was not only to the French Government that the Hudson's Bay Company rendered great services during the War. For over four years, under various forms of Russian Government, including Bolshevic, it maintained an agency in Archangel, which was only abandoned when the British Government ordered the removal of all British subjects. During that period, all the munitions from France for Russia and Roumania were transported under the Company's flag, in effect, if not always in fact, to Archangel; on the return voyages over 350,000 tons of wheat, transported by rail and river from Siberia, together with timber, ore, flax, hemp, beetroot seeds and other cargo were taken to French ports. Great risks accompanied these operations, but they were, to some extent, of a kind with which the Company had long been familiar, and for which some of its vessels were especially adapted. The countless voyages to Hudson Bay had familiarised the Company and its servants with the navigation of frozen seas; but now there were other difficulties and dangers to face, in addition to those due to the climate. In the winter of 1915-16 five of the vessels were frozen in the ice; at Bakaritsa in November, 1916, five vessels, under the control of the Company, were damaged by an explosion, one being completely destroyed. Three months later, at Economia, a more serious explosion occurred; the ice-breaker *Iceland* blew up; the S.S. *Bayropea*, which lay alongside, was completely wrecked, and three other steamers, the *Baymano*, *Consul Horn*, and *St. Adresse* were damaged. The

munitions on shore caught fire, resulting in a series of minor explosions, which lasted for several days. Nothing could be done to extinguish the fire; all the fire-brigade men had been killed, their equipment had been wrecked, and the thermometer registered 50 degrees (Fahr.) of frost.

The first explosion also destroyed the big cranes used for discharging heavy weights, and it became a matter of the most vital importance to replace these cranes in time for the large arrivals of such things as heavy guns, munitions and locomotives, which were to be landed in 1917 for the use of the Russian armies.

We cannot, if only for want of space, tell the story of these times. Pages could be filled with the record of one of these explosions and of its human and material consequences. We can but suggest to the imaginative reader some of the consequences of such an episode as an explosion. Without warning, the vessel and the men on board disappear; the cause may be guessed, but the evidence which might substantiate it has been destroyed. Yet none of those who witnessed, or heard of, the fate of their comrades was deterred from unhesitatingly undertaking a similar risk for themselves.

In one of the rooms in the Company's office in London are many square yards of boards, on which, in movable type, are recorded details of the movements of the Company's fleet; by cable, or wireless, or by any other method that may be available, the news is flashed to London; one vessel, or more, must disappear from the board; its place must be filled; its cargo must be made good; the appliances destroyed must be replaced; but how? The available resources of the world seem to have been already exhausted; but "difficulties which deter the weak are a spur and stimulus to the strong"; there are unhurried consultations as to what must be done. The men at the head of affairs have world-wide connections and influence; they know, or can ascertain, where to find and how to obtain the unusual things they need. As an example of this, the Company was requested by Commandant Dmitrieff, Russian Naval Attaché in Paris, to replace the great cranes destroyed by the explosion. They were told that a floating crane, capable of lifting 125 tons, might be available at Cadiz in Spain; it was promptly purchased, the upperworks being loaded on the deck of the S.S. *Stellina*, which was carrying to Archangel a cargo of lead from Malaga and cork from North Africa. The pontoon itself was towed to Archangel by the Admiralty tug *Blackcock*.



Another and larger crane, just completed in Holland for the Brazilian Government, was purchased through the Company's agents in a neutral country and shortly afterwards towed to Archangel by the Admiralty tug *Sarah Jolliffe*, escorted by British destroyers. Although the upper part of the structure was dismantled, the lower tower stood 74 ft. above water. The feat of towing such a craft through seas where enemy submarines were actively engaged exhibits the typical courage and bravery of the men of the British Navy who performed such arduous and dangerous tasks as these.

Another request of the Russian Government was that the Company would purchase and deliver harbour equipment and anti-submarine craft. Fishing trawlers, yachts of high speed, half-a-dozen tugs of about 125 tons, and other small craft were obtained in America; crews were found, and the Atlantic was crossed in the stormy season under conditions of extreme difficulty.

The voyage of the *Vigilant* may be selected for record. A small tug, with a net tonnage of 86 and a length of 117 ft., she sailed from New York on September 24th, 1916. More than a month afterwards, she was 480 miles from Queenstown, to which place a wireless message was sent stating that the Captain was steering for that port, experiencing very heavy gales, and asking for an escort. Two days later the Captain and most of the crew abandoned the vessel, and went on board a passing steamer. The second mate, Robert Ferguson, along with fireman John Smith and Thomas Welch, greaser, refused to leave the vessel and worked her safely into Berehaven, County Cork, where they arrived on October 31st, 1916. Greaser Thomas Welch acted as engineer, and the vessel received very little damage. After the necessary overhaul in England, she was safely delivered to the Russian Government in Northern Russia. For these fine services the men received from the Company the sum of £5,000, of which half was paid to the mate and one-quarter each to Welch and Smith.

Three sailing vessels were purchased by the Company for the Russian Government and fitted for rapidly coaling the boats which patrolled the northern coasts of Russia; one of these, the *Inverlogie*, was lost the day after leaving Cardiff; the officers noticed an inoffensive looking object on the water, but did not realise, until too late, that it was an enemy submarine.

Heavy as were the losses suffered from German submarines, the Company's vessels occasionally had their revenge; this is illustrated

by the story of the S.S. *Nascopie*, which had long been owned by the Company for use in the yearly service to Hudson Bay. In the first half of 1916, under the command of Captain G. E. Mack, she made two trips from Brest to the White Sea, loaded with munitions for the Russian Government. When returning from Archangel in May, 1916, she cleared the way through the heavy ice for the French cruiser *La Champagne*, upon which MM. Viviani and Thomas were returning to France after a conference with the Russian Government. In January, 1917, she carried another cargo of munitions to Murmansk, and then made two long voyages from Murmansk to Archangel in the depth of winter, at a time when the ice conditions were at their worst. In the following year she performed several voyages on this route for the British Government.

In June, 1917, shortly after leaving Archangel for Montreal, she was attacked by a large enemy submarine; the fourth shot from the *Nascopie's* gun caused a great explosion aboard the submarine, which disappeared. The Captain and crew had the satisfaction of receiving the thanks of the Admiralty, together with a bounty for the destruction of the submarine.

The difficulties of supplying France with the requisite quantities of food were greatly increased during the later years of the War by the depredations of the submarines. The Company sustained the loss of one hundred and ten steamers, aggregating 475,000 deadweight tons, valued at over £11,000,000, and carrying cargoes worth approximately £14,000,000. The submarines could not always be sunk; the vessels which were lost could not always be replaced, but the French people would have gone more hungry than they did had not the Hudson's Bay Company contrived measures by which to accomplish the task entrusted to it. The remedy was sought in increased efficiency and the most complete arrangements for the rapid loading and discharge of the vessels. For this purpose barges, floating cranes, elevators, and mechanical transporters were provided at Rouen, Havre, Bordeaux, and Nantes. Arrangements were made for bunkering during discharge, and for stocks of coal in many French ports, at Algiers, Dakar, Montevideo, and elsewhere. Not one of the Company's steamers was ever held up from sailing through want of bunker coals. At the time of the great coal shortage in America in 1917, when New York and other harbours were frozen up, and during the British railway strike and the American coal



strike, which dislocated shipping in the autumn of 1919, the Hudson's Bay Company's vessels kept to their programme.

There is much else that might be told of the part which the Company played during the Great War. Towards the end of 1917 it undertook the management of four large Russian passenger steamers, sharing, with several other vessels, in the special service of the transport of passengers and troops. These four vessels carried nearly 13,000 passengers of many different nationalities ; there were British, French, Russian, and Italian ; they carried 5,000 Serbians, and nearly 2,000 Alsations ; other nationalities were Czecho-Slovaks, Belgians, Roumanians, Swiss, Argentines, and Arabs. Many of these passengers had escaped from German and Austrian war prisons, and each, perhaps, had an experience that would last a lifetime, yet we epitomise them all in a sentence !

The complexity of the arrangements that had to be made is suggested by one of these vessels. The German steamer *Prinz Heinrich* was interned in Portugal, requisitioned by the Portuguese Government, chartered by the British Government, sub-let to the French Government, and allotted to the Hudson's Bay Company for management ; she carried to Russia many hundreds of Russian Jews, who preferred repatriation to service in the British Army. It is typical of the multifarious duties undertaken by the Company that it had to provide each passenger with eight days' rations, to cover the railway journey from Murmansk to Petrograd. No less suggestive is the fact that this same vessel had to be provisioned as a floating hotel for French and British refugees from Russia, of whom she took nearly 2,000 on board at Murmansk, bringing them to the Tyne in April, 1918.

It will be remembered that Sir Ernest Shackleton's expedition to the South Pole set out before the War, and in 1915 a relief expedition appeared necessary. The Company's S.S. *Discovery* had made a voyage to the White Sea late in 1915, carrying munitions for Russia, and returning with alcohol for the manufacture of gunpowder. The British Government asked for the loan of this particularly suitable vessel, which, after being fitted out in the Admiralty Dockyard at Devonport, sailed for Montevideo ; there it was learnt that the Antarctic explorers had been rescued, so the *Discovery* was employed to carry a cargo of grain to France, where, with several other vessels, she took part in the extensive coasting service which had been organised by the Company for transporting grain from the incoming steamers to the smaller ports of France.



S.S. "PELICAN"  
AT NEW YORK,  
1915.

ICEBOUND  
COAL BARGES  
IN  
NEW YORK  
HARBOUR.

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& Underwood,  
New York.)



THE "DISCOVERY," CAPTAIN SCOTT'S OLD SHIP,  
OWNED BY THE COMPANY.



STERN VIEW, SHOWING ROUNDED HULL TO PREVENT  
VESSEL FROM BEING SQUEEZED IN THE ICE.





One more episode may be mentioned. The S.S. *Pelican* made in 1918 a voyage across the Atlantic to bring back from Hudson Bay a cargo of furs valued at £250,000. On this voyage she was attacked by a submarine, and, although steaming only seven knots, she was able by means of zig-zag and the effective use of her defence gun to reach port in safety. Not so the German submarine; and the Admiralty bounty was given to the Captain and his crew.

We are back to the fur trade, and the story it calls to mind of episodes and adventures kindred to, but different from those of the Great War. We remember how the French Admiral D'Iberville, after three months of dangerous and exciting adventure, sailed into Hudson Bay in 1685 and seized the Company's Fort at the mouth of Moose River. Charles and Albany Forts were also taken, and for some years, in spite of France and England being nominally at peace, a miniature war was waged in Hudson Bay between the British and French. At a later date, Hearne, the intrepid explorer, who had been given the command of Prince of Wales' Fort, surrendered it to the superior force of the French Admiral de la Perouse, and—as has been told already—the Indian, Matonabee, returning to find that the, to him, invincible English were prisoners of war, blew out his brains.

The navigation of rapids in a birchbark canoe was conducted in the same spirit as the contest between the *Nascopie* and the modern submarine. The calmness with which the crews of the twentieth century faced the dangers of the War had their parallel in the spirit in which the traders of the Company went on occasion with Indians on the war-path and encountered, it might be massacre, it might be death from hunger, not in ignorance of the dangers, but in fearlessness.

During the Great War five hundred and twenty employees of the Company temporarily left its service and enlisted in the fighting forces of the Allies. Sorrow and pride are mingled when it is remembered that no less than seventy-eight of these can never return.

Other similarities and differences may be noted between past and present. From its very beginnings the activities of the Company have been largely conducted from London by men who, through the greater part of the Company's history, have been in touch with the foremost developments of their time, and have frequently been actively concerned with affairs of State and with international problems. They applied the knowledge, influence, and spirit of the most advanced civilisation to their dealings with Indians, and to the crude systems of



barter and transport in the unexplored Dominion of Canada. Hence, there was a largeness of view which sometimes sacrificed immediate gain for future profit, and at other times discarded gain from a sense of social responsibility. The invariably good treatment of the Indians by the Company's servants, to which reference has already been made, is a case in point. There were periods when the adventurous activities of rivals met with a success far exceeding that of the quieter methods of the Company's officials. The Nor'-Westers and others intrigued against the Company in London, or elsewhere, and at various times the Company was directly concerned with—in some measure even the cause of—delicate negotiations between nations. Of whatever nature the difficulties might be, the Company came through them with success. Success and prosperity do not last for two hundred and fifty years without good reason. The explanation is to be found in the statesmanship, public spirit, and efficiency which have almost invariably characterised the direction of the Company. These features have been developed and improved by exercise, and they promise for the Company a future that will be even greater than its past.

It is appropriate to celebrate the granting of the Charter by King Charles, two hundred and fifty years ago. This gave the Company its opportunity, which it would have been easier to miss than to use. A few square feet of parchment and the seal of a king are interesting and significant as a symbol, but historians and men of science look beyond appearances in search for realities, and thus, in some measure, view things in right perspective.

It is even now too soon to form a final judgment upon the influence of the Hudson's Bay Company upon Canada and the world. During the Great War, it contributed much towards the victory of freedom and civilisation. The task it accomplished in face of continuous and immense difficulties has been briefly indicated ; but does this represent the highest achievement of the Company ? Or are there waiting for it greater services to be rendered in the future ?

Time has changed into romance the early days of the fur-trade and of the exploration and growth of Canada. To an instructed imagination it is difficult to think of any greater service than that of playing a leading part in this development of a great Dominion. Even the conspicuous services rendered by the Company during the Great War must, perhaps, be regarded as of less moment.

The work to be done and the methods to be adopted change with the times. Aerial transport of furs may be the ultimate successor of the birchbark canoe, and of the difficult journeys of Indians and traders. The Indian may yet step into an aeroplane with but little more hesitation than he first showed in entering an elevator. Wireless may destroy the isolation of the scattered trading-posts, and the Company's establishment on Churchill River may become a great port, bringing the Canadian West nearer by hundreds of miles to the Old World.

If such things come, they will be merely the machinery and the external expression of the greater services the Company has yet to render to the Dominion it has already served so well. A long history and a great tradition give a power and a momentum not easily stayed. In some future century a later historian will give the record of the times that are now to come. It will be a story of still greater accomplishments, of services yet more valuable, and of the continued growth of the spirit and tradition which have prevailed throughout the Company since the granting of the Charter two hundred and fifty years ago.





London, S.E. 1.



MAP OF THE  
DOMINION OF CANADA  
SHEWING THE ESTABLISHMENTS  
OF THE  
HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY













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